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Insurgent Peace:

The Community-led Peace Zone of Indigenous Peoples in Sagada, Philippines

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Geography

by

Vener Valerio Macaspac

2018

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Insurgent Peace:

The Community-led Peace Zone of Indigenous Peoples in Sagada, Philippines

by

Vener Valerio Macaspac

Doctor of Philosophy in Geography

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Adam D. Moore, Chair

In a global era when most wars are fought between state and non-state actors, how do people make and maintain peace? In the Philippines, indigenous peoples of Sagada declared their community as a 'peace zone' in 1989 and banned the entry of the military and New People's Army (NPA), a non-state armed group waging the world's longest communist insurgency. Existing research on peace zones identifies Sagada as a 'best practice' model for other countries. For almost 30 years, the indigenous community of Sagada has effectively refused military and NPA presence and prevented conflict-related civilian deaths and displacement. This dissertation examines the processes through which the community maintains the peace zone beyond the purview of the state and rebels, and what these tell us about peace. Situated within the 'local' and 'ethnographic turn' in peacebuilding literature, this dissertation also considers the challenges of ethnographic approaches in the study of peace, specifically from the perspective of a local researcher from the Global South. Focusing upon 'suspicion' and 'double suspicion', it offers a reflective account of the many challenges local researchers encounter in the field, revealing the differential politics in ethnography. Finally, this dissertation locates peace as an intellectual object of study in Geography, asserting that while geographers broaden the understanding of peace beyond its dominant definition of the absence of violence, there is a tendency to define peace within default Western framework that limits, rather than broaden, scholarly efforts in challenging normative Liberal Peace practices. At stake in this dissertation is a re-thinking of peace 'from the margins', contributing to the emergent field of Peace Geographies.

The dissertation of Vener Valerio Macaspac is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles

2018

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAG	American Association of Geographers
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AGS	American Geographic Society
CAFGU	Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit
CAR	Cordillera Administrative Region
CARHRIHL	Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law
CASER	Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms
CfP	Coalition for Peace
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COC-IS	Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
EDSA	Epifanio delos Santos Avenue
EPR	Ethnographic Peace Research
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMF	Foreign Military Fund
FMLN	*Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*
FTO	Foreign terrorist organization
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
ICG	International Crisis Group
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
LGU	Local Government Unit
LP	Liberal Peace
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MPC	Municipal Peace Committee
MRDC	Montañosa Research and Development Center
NDFP	National Democratic Front of the Philippines
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPA	New People's Army
OBL	*Oplan Bantay Laya*
PO	People's Organizations
PPOC	Provincial Peace and Order Council
PR	Peace Research
REDEPAZ	*Red Nacional de Iniciativas Ciudadanas por la Paz y contra la Guerra*
SB	*Sangguniang Bayan*
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VFA	Visiting Forces Agreement

them had shaped my research and created a lasting impact on me as to how I approach

social science research. I also feel deeply indebted to the anonymous reviewers and

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To my mother and family, I dedicate this dissertation and the hard work, persistence, purpose, aspirations, and hope it embodies.

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Macaspac, V. "Geography and Peace," *Progress in Human Geography* (in revision)

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Research Report

Calatayud, A., R. Martinez, V. Macaspac, et.al. (2011) *In Search of Justice: A Population-based Survey on the Participation of Cambodian-Americans in the Khmer Rouge Tribunal.* Berkeley: UC Berkeley Media and Mail.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2016	*"Insurgent Peace: Peacebuilding among Indigenous Peoples of Sagada, Philippines,"* Annual Conference of the American Association of Geographers (AAG). San Francisco.
2015	*"Community-led peace zone in Sagada, Philippines,"* Annual Conference of the AAG. Chicago.
2015	Panelist, Placing Geographic Knowledge Production about the Philippines: Circuits of Engagement and Transactions. Annual Conference of the AAG. Chicago.
2015	*"Peace zone: Local Peacebuilding, Agency, and Autonomy among Indigenous Peoples of Sagada, Philippines,"* Conference on Political Participation in Asia. Stockholm University.
2014	*"Re-imagining Geographic Knowledge,"* Conference on Southeast Asia and the Disciplines. 16th Cornell University Southeast Asia Graduate Student Conference.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In April 2018 I sat down with Thomas Killip, also known by his indigenous Igorot[1]

name Champag, the former mayor of the municipality of Sagada in Mountain Province, at the

wake of his aunt who had passed away a few days earlier. "Come to the wake so I can read your

paper while I sit there and we can talk," Champag told me when I spoke to him after a Sunday

morning service at the Episcopal Church near the *poblacion*. The next morning I was rushing to

finish photocopying a fifty-page chapter of my dissertation at the public market when I ran into

him. "I am parked outside and find me when you are ready". We drove to his aunt's home,

around ten minutes away from the public market. We said our greetings to his relatives as we

walked through the house, with Champag introducing me to everyone we passed by. Visitors

were sitting in the main common room, a wall was decorated with his aunt's name, her

husband's, and names of her siblings and their children. His aunt lay on a wooden bed, around

three feet above the floor, and snugly covered with a light colored blanket up just below her

shoulders. Her hair was untied but combed, neatly flowing through a white pillow. Two elderly

women were closely sitting beside her, by her right shoulder, facing her. I gently shook their

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[1] I use the term Igorot that indigenous peoples in Sagada and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in northern Philippines use to refer to the general population of the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, and Mountain Province, and the cities of Baguio and Tabuk. Indigenous peoples in the Philippines are ethnolinguistic communities who retained significant customary traditions and social organization throughout over three centuries of Spanish and American colonialism in the Philippines. Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) signed into law in 1997 defines indigenous peoples as "a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos." Ten to twenty percent of a hundred million population in the Philippines are indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are considered minority populations in the country alongside Muslim Filipinos.

hands and offered my condolences. Champag took me to a patio at the back of the house. It was

made into a kitchen with huge pots of boiling broth and steamed rice. Men and women were

busy chopping vegetables and preparing meat. We sat by a round table covered with cuttings of

purple paper left by family members making decorations for the wake and a very large bottle of

whisky left open for visitors. A couple of older people were sitting by the huge pots and

chatting calmly in Kankana-ey, the language spoken in Sagada. Some younger family members

were busy preparing the buffet table of rice, boiled pork meat and chitterlings, stir fried beans,

and boiled potatoes. In Sagada depending on the kind of death, whether of old age, accident,

sickness, murder, a death of a newborn, a child, or a young adult, the people hold animal

sacrifices of pigs or dogs.[2] I learned from Champag that twenty-one pigs were sacrificed for his

aunt's wake, and perhaps another ten for the burial. That must have been very expensive, I

remarked, and a lot of pigs to sacrifice from one family. He told me that other relatives,

neighbors, and community members help out, offering their pigs. "There will come a time when

they will need their neighbors to do that for them too," Champag said. Many people gather at

the wake, especially in the evenings, and even relatives living in the U.S. came home to pay

their respects. The sacrificed pigs, rice, and vegetables contributed by community members help

the bereaved family feed all visitors throughout the wake. Death in Sagada is a big thing, I

thought, just like in all indigenous communities in the Cordillera region who put up feasts and

gatherings to mark or celebrate important stages of an individual's life, from birth to death.

Being at the wake and learning how community members help each other during a period of

mourning reminded me of the central role that deaths took in mobilizing the people of Sagada

thirty years ago, to demand an end to armed violence and make Sagada a 'peace zone'.

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[2] See Dinah Elma Piluden-Omengan, 2004, *Death and Beyond: Death and Burial Rituals & Other Practices & Beliefs of the Igorots of Sagada, Mountain Province, Philippines*.

In 1988 two minors, four-year old Hardy Bagni, Jr. and seventeen-year old Kenneth Bayang, were shot dead on October 28 after some members of the 50th Infantry Division of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) encamped in Sagada opened fire in front of the public market. A month after, on November 11, another child, twelve-year old Benito Tumapang, Jr., died from crossfire that ensued after members of a communist rebel group, New People's Army (NPA), staged an attack on the military unit occupying a public elementary school. Many of my research interlocutors, including a school teacher at that time, recall the indignation that community members felt from the deaths of the children. Others commented that some *lallakay* or male elders in Sagada raised concerns regarding the social and financial costs of the customary rituals their communities had to bear to provide *kappia*–peace–to the families of the children and cleanse the community of the violence that took place in their land. In late November that year, community members, mostly coming from the southern *baranggays,* gathered at the basketball court and marched toward the *poblacion* demanding that the military and rebels "pull out" of Sagada. A year after, community officials led by Champag, then a young first-time vice mayor, wrote the "12-Point Town Resolution and Plea for the Demilitarization of Sagada" that lays out the regulations set by the community on the conduct of the armed conflict between the AFP and NPA within Sagada.

"The timing of our meeting is perfect," Champag told me, in his typical pensive and quiet way of speaking, after he finished reading my paper. I was anxious to hear his thoughts, after days of mustering the confidence to present many years of work to him and other research interlocutors. I had been conducting fieldwork in Sagada for twelve cumulative months since 2014 and had interviewed Champag on several occasions to understand the processes through which the community maintains the peace zone in the context of almost fifty years of

insurgency and counterinsurgency. He expressed his appreciation and commented on how my

paper captures the complexity asserting the legitimacy of the community's initiative to the AFP

and NPA. "There have been studies about Sagada but [they] were not as in-depth like your

research," he mentioned, and requested to keep the copy that he was reading. Immediately, he

switched our conversation to tell me an "update". A few weeks ago, he was invited by the

current mayor of Sagada to attend a meeting of the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC),

an inter-agency coordinating mechanism attended by officials of the provincial government,

AFP, Philippine National Police (PNP), municipal mayors, and other provincial government

agencies tasked with monitoring public safety and implementing security policies, including

policies related to counterinsurgency. AFP officials, citing reports of "sightings of rebel

presence", were proposing to set up in Sagada two detachments of CAFGUs, or Citizen Armed

Force Geographical Unit, a paramilitary unit that serves as an auxiliary force for the AFP during

counterinsurgency operations. After a series of consultations and negotiations, Champag, in his

update, told me that he managed to arrive at a "compromise" with the AFP and PPOC

members. He proposed to delay any plans of setting up CAFGU detachments and instead let

the people of Sagada strengthen their own mechanisms of maintaining the security of the

municipality. He also recommended to delay the plans for three years, a number I thought at

first was arbitrary but later realized refer to the remaining years of the current national

administration before a change of guard in many government offices including the military

could happen. The proposal of the AFP and PPOC to set up CAFGU detachments in Sagada is

unprecedented in the history of the municipality, particularly in the last thirty years of

community work of restricting the entry, presence, and operations of any armed groups, both

military and rebels. There also are no residents of Sagada who have ever joined the CAFGU.

The military officials eventually agreed.

Insurgent peace

This dissertation asks, *What kind of work is required from civilian communities to protect their own lives amidst a prolonged active armed conflict? How do indigenous peoples of Sagada maintain the community-led peace zone beyond the purview of the state and rebels? And, what can this tell us about peace and the geographic study of peace?* I use the term *community-led* rather than 'local' to underscore the specificities of initiatives of civilian communities in protecting their own lives as distinct processes from peacebuilding projects of state and non-state actors, the United Nations (U.N.), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or civil society organizations (CSOs). The phrase community-led also allows me to differentiate community-initiated peace practices from the category of "local peacebuilding" that scholars use to refer to localized implementations of international peacebuilding and humanitarian projects in mostly post-conflict situations in the Global South.

At stake in this investigation is a reconceptualization of peace and peacebuilding from the dominant understanding of state-led, expert-driven, and technical projects of conflict transformation. With an ethnographic focus on what I call *insurgent peace* I argue that peace also relies upon the complex and inventive work of civilian communities in protecting their own lives, particularly in the context of an active armed conflict between state and non-state actors. Insurgent peace captures the processes through which marginalized communities carve alternative political spaces, transform relations of power, and enact peaceful futures in the midst of armed conflict and political violence. This contributes to our understanding of peace beyond its dominant definition as the absence of physical, structural, and symbolic violence (Galtung

1969; 1985; 1990). Attending to community-led practices of indigenous peoples of Sagada also allows me to better understand the mechanics of community-led and indigenous peacebuilding as distinct from yet related to state-centric and international processes, thus contributing to existing knowledge on geographies of peace. Further, through an analysis of the experiences of indigenous peoples in maintaining the community-led peace zone in Sagada, I examine the concepts of local peacebuilding specifically, and peace more broadly, as well as reflect upon the challenges of ethnographic peace research.

Geographies of peace

Existing definitions of peace as 'absence of violence' and peace zones as 'demilitarized geographic areas' obscure the daily realities of civilian communities who are entangled in prolonged armed conflict, often between state and non-state actors. Scholars define peace zones as static neutral spaces, and peace as an endpoint in a long period of violence. My research demonstrates that both peace and peace zones are better understood as dynamic processes that emerge from and are continuously shaped by a conjuncture of specific historical, cultural, and geographic processes. Peace zones are not fixed demilitarized spaces. These spaces cannot be reduced to neutral geographic areas. Rather, as my dissertation demonstrates, peace zones can be better understood as active processes and relationships that simultaneously disrupt the social and spatial logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency while transforming the relations of power between civilian communities and competing armed actors, by presenting the former as a party equally affected by, and with equal stakes in, the war.

At the same time defining peace as absence of violence does not fully capture the constant and complex work being done by civilian communities. This is illustrated by the experiences of indigenous peoples of Sagada who maintain a community-led peace zone and

protect their own lives in the midst of active armed conflict, outside the purview of the state, its

military, and other institutions that produce a highly militarized and surveilled situation in the

name of 'national security'. Critical geographers argue that there is more than one type of peace.

As Sara Koopman (2011b) reminds us, peace is "not the same everywhere any more than war

is", a reality even more palpable among indigenous peoples communities of the Cordillera

region in northern Philippines, each of which has specific internal and territorial-based

mechanisms of *pagta, pechen,* or *bodong*, customary forms of inter-tribal dispute ('tribal war')

conflict resolution and peace pact that are rooted in community-level traditions and histories of

war and peace (Prill-Brett 1987; Prill-Brett 1995).[3] Interdisciplinary peace scholars are

increasingly recognizing that peace is a phenomenon that is situated and emplaced (Björkdahl

and Kappler 2017; Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016), that peace is rooted in historical, cultural,

and geographic specificities of a place and people. By studying place-specific practices in post-

conflict environments, peace scholars investigate the interactions between individuals, groups,

states, and institutions in the implementation of peacebuilding projects.[4] The notion of peace

zones and peace as inherently historical and spatial phenomena merits a critical geographic

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[3] *Bodong* (in Kalinga) and *pechen* (in Bontoc, Mountain Province) are territorially-based bilateral processes of non-aggression between *ili* (communities or tribes). A key feature of these is the *pagta*, an unwritten or written covenant that lays out the mechanisms for processing any forms of breach, regulating inter-tribal or inter-community relations, and promoting and maintaining bonds of amity. See Prill-Brett 1987; Prill-Brett 1995. In Sagada, the Fidelisan *ili* in the northern part of the municipality was entangled in a 'tribal war' with their neighboring *ili* Dalican, which is part of Bontoc municipality, over access to water. The two *ili* eventually arrived at a truce, but only after intense gunfight, loss of lives, and a hostage incident. The municipal government in Sagada was not actively involved in resolving the conflict, and the responsibilities were mostly held by elders and community members from the Fidelisan *ili*. There were also no prosecutions related to the deaths related to the conflict. See Morella, 2005.

[4] Interestingly, many geographers studying peace are turning toward understanding the 'how' of peace while interdisciplinary scholars are turning toward questions of 'where' is peace. Anthropologists, while having a longstanding tradition of studying 'peaceful societies' as well as engaged scholarship focusing on peoples who experience mass atrocities, have been only recently contributing to Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies. See Souillac and Fry, 2016; Hydle, 2006.

study of the processes through which civilian communities carve out spaces of peace and build peaceful futures within a landscape of everyday war between competing structures of power of state and non-state armed actors.

Local peacebuilding

War, and the threat and use of armed force and violence, remains central to states as an instrument of diplomacy, foreign policy, statecraft, and statehood (Art and Cronin 2003; Haass 1999; George 1997). While the number of inter-state wars have declined after the Cold War, intra-state wars between state and non-state actors are on the rise (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). Some scholars argue that the mechanics and aims of war have shifted from decisive military battles between states in order to seize territories, toward the blurring of war, crimes, and organized violence largely directed toward civilian populations (Kaldor 2012; 2013). Unsuccessful peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding[5] interventions by the U.N. in Somalia, Yugoslavia, and Rwanda in the 1990s, the limits of the Liberal Peace[6] framework and its 'three pillars' of democratization, free markets, and the rule of law, and changing patterns in the geographies of war post-9/11, have compelled scholars to reflect on dominant peace research frameworks and methods (Richmond 2013; Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013). Thus Liberal Peace projects have been critiqued as a form of peacebuilding

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[5] Distinctions between these three ideas and practices are stated in the *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping* (1992) written by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, as follows: "*Peacemaking* is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations; *Peace-keeping* is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peace-keeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace." *Post-conflict peacebuilding* refers to actions that "strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict".

[6] I capitalize letters to refer to specific intentional interventions or projects and use small letters to refer to broader processes (i.e., Liberal Peacebuilding vis-a-vis liberal peacebuilding, etc.). Here, I draw from Gillian Hart's (2001) useful distinction between "big D" and "small d" development.

institutionalized through the U.N. that "represents a neoliberal marketisation of peace, rather than engagement with the agents and subjects of this peace" (Richmond 2009: 152; see also Richmond 2011). Two lines of analysis have emerged from this critique. On the one hand is the criticism over the IKEA-like modularity of Liberal Peacebuilding, which seeks to transform non-Western states into liberal democratic states with market economies: an imposition of peace, security and development solutions from the Global North to the Global South (Paffenholz 2015). On the other hand are those arguing that the Liberal Peace framework and its proposed solution of Liberal Democracy are not the problem per se, but a heavy concentration toward fixing 'failed states' and promoting solutions to strengthen statebuilding (Sabaratnam 2011). Both analyses highlight the need to attend to non-Western peace processes and agents, to a deeper understanding of local processes, and to the importance of cultivating relationships with local actors, key findings reiterated in recent investigations of international peacebuilding interventions in the Global South (Autesserre 2014a; Millar 2014; Moore 2013; Fontan 2012). These developments in peace research, led particularly by scholars in the U.S., Canada, and parts of Europe, also led to an 'ethnographic turn' in which researchers are increasingly adopting the ethnographic method of participant observation, spending longer time in the field, and attending to local actors and processes, to better understand the outcomes of international peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict environments in the Global South (Millar 2018b).

The shift toward local and ethnographic research methods in peace research is not without criticism. Foremost among the criticisms of the 'local turn', or a conscious aim to excavate the 'local' in relation to international peacebuilding projects, is that it reproduces the tendency toward a binary and neatly bounded view of the local vis-à-vis the international. Scholars have responded to this critique by examining "global-local encounters", including

both their conflictual and constitutive effects. Drawing from Anna Tsing's (2005) notion of "friction", some scholars have argued that Liberal Peacebuilding should not be viewed as simply a 'top-down' global project enacted by a set of global actors. Rather Liberal Peacebuilding projects and actors are always modified and transformed by their encounters with local actors and local realities on the ground; studying these encounters can help unpack what "localness" is (Björkdahl and Höglund 2013: 292). Second, there is a tendency to dismiss the 'ethnographic turn' in peace research as an "impulsive response to a quixotic fad", to which advocates reply that the shift toward ethnographic methods and long-term fieldwork was engendered by two decades of scholarly debates around post-conflict intervention (Millar 2018a: 2). Finally, some scholars argue that the 'local turn' in peace research is as problematic as Liberal Peacebuilding, noting prevailing Eurocentric assumptions and ideas of Western distinctiveness among peace scholars from the Global North as they grapple with the content of the 'local' alongside the notion of 'the everyday', as distinct from and in relation to the 'international' (Sabaratnam 2013).

I assert that the local turn in peace research highlights the significance of understanding community-level actors, relations of power, realities, and practices in order for scholars to better grasp the processes through which place-specific, culturally relevant, and sustainable forms of peace are imagined and enacted by people on the ground. In the fields of Geography, Political Science, and Peace Studies, scholars who have conducted research on sub-national peace practices have contributed new knowledge about the conduct of Liberal Peacebuilding. Adam Moore (2013) analyzed socio-spatial and temporal sources of international peacebuilding efforts in Bosnia, with varying outcomes at the sub-national level brought about by place-specific wartime legacies, the architecture of local political institutions, the sequence of

post-conflict reforms, and overall practices of international peacebuilding in the two towns he studied. Séverine Autusserre (2014b), drawing from her own experience as a U.N. Peacekeeping officer in many places in Africa including the Congo, produced a fine-grained empirical analysis of the daily practices of international peacebuilding practitioners to illustrate the ways in which the social habits and level of appreciation of individual and institutional responsibilities among expatriates working for the U.N. strongly influence the outcomes, and at times produce unintended and counter-productive consequences, of international peacebuilding efforts. Geaoroid Millar (2016), addressing the absence of grounded assessments of international peacebuilding mechanisms, investigated the disruptive and potentially conflict-promoting large-scale foreign direct investment (FDI) and marketization projects as part of the Liberal Peacebuilding approaches of economic development in rural Sierra Leone. However, there are the limits to existing and recent studies of peace and peacebuilding, despite the increased and conscious attention to local peacebuilding practices and experiences. Specifically, most research remains focused on either 'national' actors (Autesserre 2014a) or interactions between international peacebuilding actors and projects and host country or local beneficiaries. There is far less research on community-led peace practices or actors outside the world of the U.N. or that of international and state-centric peacebuilding projects.

Ethnographic challenges in studying peace

Since the beginning of the interdisciplinary field of peace research, studies of peace have been dominated by quantitative approaches and rationalist models that analyze the success or failure of Liberal Peace solutions to armed conflict. Over the last decade, the local turn in peace literature compelled scholars to adapt ethnographic approaches of participant observation to better understand and capture the nuances of local peace processes, actors

practices. The shift toward ethnographic approaches to studying peace in post-conflict environments also led to increased interest in the challenges of conducting ethnographic fieldwork and spending longer time in field sites, mostly in post-conflict environments in the Global South. Scholars largely coming from Europe and the U.S. took initiative to consolidate experiences and 'lessons learned' of researchers who conduct ethnographic research in the Global South, shaping an emergent field called Ethnographic Peace Research (EPR) (Millar 2018a; 2018b). Begging to be considered in the EPR literature are experiences of researchers from the Global South who conduct studies in their countries in the midst of armed conflict and political violence. While concerns around access, personal and data security, ethical research, protection of Human Subjects, and mobility, along with physical, emotional and mental stress, are among the shared challenges researchers experience in conducting ethnographic research in volatile environments, I attend to specific experiences and difficulties encountered by 'local' researchers from the Global South allows us to understand a wider range of challenges of EPR. As I note above, the majority of armed conflicts occur in the Global South. Increasingly, local researchers are conducting ethnographic investigations of armed violence, agency, and peaceful futures, drawing on capacities for long-term ethnographic immersion, a broader and deeper grasp of local institutions, customs and histories, higher-level language abilities, and extensive personal and professional networks—all of which are key elements of productive fieldwork. Yet amidst mass violence, human rights atrocities, and a culture of impunity in many conflict environments in the Global South, local researchers experience specific challenges in their conduct of ethnographic and scholarly research that do not appear in reflective accounts in existing EPR literature. Further, as existing accounts largely draw from experiences of researchers from the Global North, most recommendations offered in the literature regarding

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the ways in which researchers can better prepare, anticipate, navigate and overcome difficulties that arise when conducting ethnographic fieldwork in conflict and post-conflict environments do not necessarily apply to local researchers from the Global South. Finally, experiences of local researchers also offer new perspectives concerning the broader question of ethnographic knowledge production and the concept of peace in relation to dominant Western intellectual and methodological frameworks.

Sagada peace zone

Community efforts to demilitarize Sagada started in 1989 after indigenous peoples declared a ban on the entry and operations of the AFP and NPA within the municipality during an indignation rally after the deaths of three children in 1988 (personal interview 2014; 2016; 2018; see also Avruch & Jose 2007; Santos 2005; Garcia 1997; Lee & Gastardo-Conaco 1994). Municipal officials and community leaders and groups wrote a "12-Point Town Resolution and Plea for the Demilitarization of Sagada" setting community regulations on all armed groups and the overall conduct of insurgency and counterinsurgency operations within Sagada. Elders and community leaders, led by Champag, took their demands to Manila to meet with government and military officials. Around that time civil society organizations (CSOs), having emerged from a popular uprising known as the EDSA People Power Revolution of 1986 that successfully ousted the Marcos dictatorship, were focused on promoting peace in the Philippines. One particular NGO, called Coalition for Peace (CfP), formed in 1986 to promote citizen participation in the peace process between between the Philippine government under Corazon Aquino and CPP-NPA-NDFP, framed the efforts of the community of Sagada as a 'peace zone', a term later popularized by the mainstream media to refer to the community-led efforts of demilitarization (personal interview 2014; 2016; see also Hancock and Mitchell 2007;

Coronel-Ferrer 2005; Santos 2005; Garcia 1997). Eventually, indigenous peoples in Sagada

adapted the term peace zone to refer to their ongoing efforts in refusing the presence of the

military and rebels and regulating the behavior of armed groups within the municipality.

Sagada is one of ten municipalities of Mountain Province in the Cordillera

Administrative Region (CAR) in the northern island of Luzon in the Philippines. It is located

258 miles north of Metro Manila, the country's capital, via Baguio City, the regional capital of

CAR, and 11 miles from Bontoc, the capital of Mountain Province. It is landlocked, sharing

borders with five municipalities: Tubo, a municipality of Abra, in the north, Bontoc in the east,

Sabangan in the south, and Bauko and Besao in the west. Sagada has a total land area of 9,969

hectares situated in a valley with an elevation of 5,000 feet above sea level (see Map 1 and 2).

Under the Local Government Code the municipality is divided administratively into nineteen

(19) *baranggays*, (a baranggay is the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines) that are in

place parallel to existing customary structures of the original six (6) *ili* (an *ili* is a settlement or

village, a pan-regional term in the Cordillera region) that form the indigenous peoples of

Sagada. Members of the community also use geographic markers to locate their *ili* and

baranggays. Northern *barangays* include Aguid, Bangaan, Fidelisan, Pide, Madongo, and

Tanulong. Central barangays include Ambasing, Balugan (Bugang), Dagdag, Demang,

Poblacion (Patay). Eastern barangays include Antadao, Kilong, Tetep-an Norte and Sur. Finally,

Southern barangays are Angkileng, Nacagang, Suyo, and Taccong. Around 99% of the 11,244

population of Sagada (Philippine Statistics Authority 2010) are indigenous peoples who speak

Kankana-ey. Some individuals from nearby municipalities now live in Sagada, along with a

small number of Western immigrants. Residents of Sagada self-identify as Igorot, a pan-regional

indigenous identity of the Cordillera region, as well as as i-Sagada, i-Aplay, or specific to one of

the ancestral *ili* (i.e., i-Fidelisan, etc.). Agriculture is the main occupation of most families in

Sagada, with almost all households owning a piece of land from which they grow and harvest

rice and vegetables largely for subsistence. Nearly all households also raise swine, for

additional income and as a source of meat necessary for rituals. Traditional weaving and a

booming tourism industry[7] are the other key sources of livelihood in Sagada. Majority of

community members, an estimate of 95%, belong to the Episcopal Church.[8] Others belong to the

Roman Catholic Church, and other smaller Christian denominations. While Western concepts

of democracy and citizenship currently frame socio-political and economic institutions in

Sagada as much as in the entire Philippines, the indigenous community of Sagada has parallel

internal values, norms, and practices that underlie daily life. Internal institutions of the *ili*

(village), *dap-day* (a socio-political unit within a village)[9], and *lallakay* (council of elders)[10] are

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[7] Sagada attracted a steady rise of local and foreign tourists from 65,000 in 2014 to over 160,000 in 2017 (see Rappler 2015; Saley 2018). After Baguio City in Benguet and Banaue in Ifugao, Sagada follows as the third top tourist destinations in the Cordillera region. Compared to the two destinations, Sagada is the least developed with regard to tourism-oriented facilities and infrastructure. Tourism resulted to mixed consequences, with positive impact such as additional income to many families and merchants and negative impact including desecration of scared places within Sagada. (see Dulnuan 161-204).

[8] In June 1904, an Episcopal Church mission arrived in Sagada led by Rev. Father John Staunton (1864-1944), an American missionary who was born in Michigan and grew up in New York. Since then, the Episcopal Church, locally known as Church of St. Mary the Virgin, remains a thriving religious community in Sagada. For a history of the mission and biography of Rev. Fr. Staunton, see Scott 2013.

[9] *Dap-ay* refers to a number of interconnected places and structures: as a social structure often referred to as a ward; as a physical structure made of stone where male elders of each ward hold ceremonies, rituals, and assemblies; as a governing or decision making body synonymous to the council of elders in each ward; and as a 'school' where male children and younger members of the ward learn the customs, histories, traditions, and norms from the elders (see F. Eggan and W.H. Scott, 1963, Ritual Life of the Igorots of Sagada: From Birth to Adolescence, *Ethnology* 2(1), 40-54).

[10] Within each *dap-ay* (ward), a group of older male members referred to as *lallakay* compose a council responsible for internal and external conflict and dispute resolution, ceremonies and rituals, relationships with other *dap-ay* or *ili.* In 'headhunting' days, the *dap-ay* (ward) served as a basic unit for warfare with other *ili (see ibid*). While the council of elders are exclusively composed of older male members, women are considered as equal to men and have significant and increasingly expanding roles within their communities, including in the economy, education, and governance, among other fields (see Villa 141-152).

sites for democratic processes of grassroots consultation and decision-making (Cariño 1996;

1992; Prill-Brett 1987; 1989). Further, *innayan* (customary law based on oral traditions) provides

the rules for exemplary and acceptable social behavior and guide the decisions of the *lallakay*

and *dap-ay* in Sagada (personal interview 2016). These traditional institutions and practices

allow the indigenous community of Sagada to maintain the peace zone.

   The armed conflict between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP)

and CPP-NPA-NDFP, a Maoist-inspired insurgency, started in 1969 and is reaching its fiftieth

year. It is estimated that over 43,000 combatants and non-combatants have died throughout the

five decades of insurgency and counterinsurgency (Holden 2013; Quimpo 2008). Each of the six

post-dictatorship presidential administrations, from Corazon Aquino to Rodrigo Duterte, has

had a 'total war' policy of counterinsurgency operations to eliminate the communist insurgency.

Most administrations also have participated in the peace process with CPP-NPA-NDFP, albeit

intermittently. Post-9/11 the military's counterinsurgency framework, goals, tactics, and

operations shifted toward direct targeting of civilian communities in order to 'drain the sea and

expose the fish'. Indigenous communities were specifically labeled by the military as "hotbeds"

and "stable base areas" of the NPA (Chua 2006). In his investigations of conflict-related human

rights violations in indigenous communities in the Philippines, former U.N. Special Rapporteur

on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Rodolfo Stavenhagen noted patterns of military occupation

and militarization of indigenous communities and territories, forced CAFGU recruitment,

displacement, extrajudicial killings, and vilification of indigenous leaders as 'communists-

terrorists' (Stavenhagen 2003a; 2003b; 2007).[11] Current U.N. Special Rapporteur Victoria Tauli-

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[11] The specific targeting of indigenous peoples as 'primitive', 'savage', 'headhunters', and 'backward'
subjects of state violence can be traced historically to Spanish and American settler-colonial projects in the
Philippines that carried on throughout under a post-independence state (see Macaspac 2011).

Corpuz, a Kankana-ey from Besao, a neighboring municipality of Sagada in Mountain Province, also raised concerns over patterns of trumped up criminal cases filed by the GRP against many indigenous peoples in the country, including herself. She was listed in March 2018 among over thirty indigenous peoples and six hundred individuals that the GRP, through the Department of Justice, petitioned to be declared as 'terrorists' (see UN 2018; Mogato 2018).

In the midst of the ongoing armed conflict, a very slow and intermittent peace process, and increasing violation of the rights of indigenous peoples under the framework of counterinsurgency, the indigenous community in Sagada is re-asserting the legitimacy of the peace zone. One of the complexities of the peace zone is that despite an acknowledgement of it as a civilian community-led initiative to promote peace, as recognized through a Philippine Senate resolution in 1992, the military regularly challenges community regulations, with some officials publicly declaring in 2013 they no longer respect the peace zone (Cabreza 2013). Meanwhile, the NPA released a statement in 2014 and claimed that the peace zone in Sagada is a counterinsurgency strategy of the CIA (Udyaw 2014). Community leaders and members of Sagada are therefore compelled to constantly assert and negotiate with the AFP and CPP-NPA-NDFP, so that they abide by the community regulations and respect the peace zone. Efforts by the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP to broker a peace deal have been marked by multiple instances of collapse over the last two decades, and at present are inconclusive (Bell and Farahnoosh 2015). Yet national level peace talks have been silent on community-initiated peace practices, specifically on the community-led peace zone in Sagada.

Methods

   Through qualitative methods of in-depth interviews and participant observation along with archival research, conducted within ten cumulative months between 2014 and 2018, I examined the processes through which the indigenous community of Sagada maintains the legitimacy of the peace zone in the context of an active armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. I interviewed fifty (50) interlocutors comprising municipal officials— including the mayor, vice mayor, a former mayor—tribal leaders, community organizers, women, a former rebel, a retired bishop, police officers, community members, human rights advocates, activists, journalists, a teacher, a human rights lawyer, and other residents. These semi- and unstructured interviews lasted between thirty minutes to over two hours. I also interviewed fifteen (15) of my interlocutors at least three (3) times, for over two hours per interview. During interviews I asked open-ended questions regarding the socio-political, economic, cultural, and historical context that led the indigenous community to make Sagada a peace zone, key challenges and achievements of community initiatives in protecting civilian lives throughout almost fifty years of active armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP, daily life in the community, individual and collective understandings of peace, individual and community aspirations, person-specific and community concerns. Other topics included indigeneity, insurgency, counterinsurgency, economic and community development, human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, land and land use, agriculture and other sources of livelihood, and migration. I selected interlocutors by purposely seeking referrals starting with male and female community leaders, tribal elders, community organizers, and government officials in order to "start at the top, with the most prestigious person in the group being studied" (Sluka 2012: 288). This approach is consistent with customary practices in Sagada,

where non-tribal members or non-indigenous peoples who are visiting Sagada on an official

capacity are expected to meet with either community elders or government officials out of

courtesy.

In Sagada, I grounded myself in two institutions. First, is the Office of the *Sangguniang*

Bayan (SB), or the legislative council of the municipal government of Sagada. SB is presided

over by Vice Mayor Benjamin Capuyan (my main contact) and composed of 12 municipal

councilors including a tribal elder (Jaime Dugao, my main contact) appointed as the Indigenous

Peoples representative to the SB. I observed a number of weekly morning meetings of the SB, as

well as the consultations and interactions between SB councilors after the meetings. These

activities allowed me to observe the dynamics of policy-making practices that reveal an

interplay between indigenous customs and norms with norms and processes required by the

mainstream local government structures. The second institution is the Montañosa Research

Development Center (MRDC), a membership-based NGO in Sagada formed in 1978. Some of

the ongoing programs of MRDC during my fieldwork revolved around increasing food security

and promoting social welfare and community development, through community-level socio-

cultural and economic projects that merge indigenous knowledge and practices with

sustainable agricultural livelihood and technologies. MRDC also facilitates grassroots

organizing among tribal elders, women, youth, and professionals in Sagada and facilitates

community negotiations with state institutions and other NGOs. I volunteered in MRDC to help

design a participatory mapping workshop using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for

indigenous peoples in Sagada, to increase their capacities in developing community-wide

climate adaptation plans. I also helped write proposals and seek for external funding for future

mapping workshops and projects. Through volunteer work, I was able to observe the day-to-

day operation and community organizing work of MRDC and participate in informal conversations among community organizers and members concerning socio-political and economic issues in Sagada in particular, and the Cordillera region in general, including indigenous peoples' rights and self-reliance, tribal conflict mediation and resolution, and many other issues of the day.

To better understand the emergence of the peace zone and the community-led efforts to protect their own lives in the context of the broader political and historical conditions in the last thirty years, I examined foundational documents of the peace zone including municipal resolutions, community petitions and transcripts of community meetings, and dialogues with the military and rebels kept in the SB office (to which I was accorded access by the municipal government). I examined transcripts of meetings of the Municipal Peace Committee (MPC), an ad hoc body that helped facilitate community meetings during the start of the peace zone, reports of community dialogues with national government officials and local leaders of the CPP-NPA-NDFP, and other pertinent documents and government records including municipal resolutions and *baranggay* and NGO petitions. These documents allowed me to trace key events leading up to the peace zone declaration, understand historically the impact of the armed conflict and the various roles of key individuals and groups in the formation of the peace zone, and examine social processes through the written records of community negotiations between the local community, the military, and rebels.

Acknowledging that the 'field site' of Sagada is not a static or a bounded entity (Geertz 1973; Gupta & Ferguson 1997; Marcus 1995) I also traced "connections, associations, and putative relationships" (Marcus 1995: 97) that shape the processes through which indigenous peoples in Sagada maintain the peace zone in relation to the state, rebels, other indigenous

communities in the Cordillera region, civil society organizations and organizers in the regional

capital of Baguio City and in Metro Manila, and international institutions, specifically the U.N. I

conducted interviews with indigenous peoples, community leaders, NGO workers, and

community organizers from Baguio City, Bontoc, and from a municipality in Kalinga, to better

understand the shared and varying geographies of the armed conflict, and peace practices in the

Cordillera region. I also interviewed government officials and a representative of the NDFP

section of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) based in Metro Manila, as well as NGOs in

Baguio City and Metro Manila focusing on indigenous peoples' rights and welfare. Further, I

observed and participated in a number of workshops held and attended by indigenous peoples

around issues of peace and security, development, human rights, and indigenous peoples'

rights. In 2014, I participated in a workshop in Sagada facilitated by MRDC and other NGOs in

the Cordillera region to enhance the capacities of indigenous communities and develop

oversight mechanisms in promoting an indigenous peoples' rights-based framework for

development. In 2016, I participated in a regional workshop and training on peace education

among indigenous peoples in Baguio City where indigenous peoples' representatives from

different provinces in the Cordillera region gathered to discuss and design a series of curricula

for popular and community education on the topic of the peace process between the GRP and

CPP-NPA-NDFP, specific peace agreements that have been signed and are on the agenda in the

current stage of the peace process including the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect of

Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and the Comprehensive

Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER), and national and international legal

instruments and norms that govern armed conflicts and provide protections for civilians against

mass atrocities and human rights violations during war. In 2018, I participated in two

workshops that aimed to gather information on human rights violations against indigenous peoples in the context of the armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. One workshop was held in Baguio City, attended by representatives from different indigenous peoples communities and human rights workers in the Cordillera region. The second was a national workshop and consultation between indigenous peoples from different regions in the Philippines and the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, which was held at the Commission on Human Rights in Metro Manila. At these workshops I listened to and spoke with indigenous peoples from Sagada and from other indigenous communities in the Cordillera region and across the country and gained insights on first-hand experiences of violence and community mechanisms to protect the lives of civilians as well as the variegated geographies of the armed conflict as experienced by specific indigenous communities and regions. I also observed the ways indigenous peoples narrate their experiences, speak to each other, consult and negotiate with government officials, institutional representatives, NGO workers, and the media. Finally, I also traveled to participate in a *bodong* ceremony to renew a *pagta* or peace pact agreement between two tribes in Kalinga, which provided the opportunity to listen to, interact with and observe two tribal communities in the Cordillera region as they discussed, examined, and built consensus on the terms of the peace pact, specifically addressing the consequences of the armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP for the peace pact agreement and maintenance of a harmonious inter-tribal relationship. At most of these gatherings I was requested to introduce myself and my research, share messages and insights from my research, and invited to partake in meals and cultural performances (i.e., *pattong* or playing of the gongs and dancing, etc.) as customary in most indigenous peoples community gatherings.

These research methods are informed by my belief in the importance of social immersion and ethical engagement. I draw from social scientific research methods and principles that encourage researchers to personally engage and participate both in daily life and the projects of my interlocutors, which provides invaluable insight into their social world that other research methods, specifically quantitative models of inquiry, do not offer (see DeWalt & DeWalt 2002; Jorgensen 1989; Schensul, et. al. 1999; Geertz 1973). I also draw inspiration from research that investigates war, political violence, and more recently, peace, using ethnographic methods of participant observation and open-ended interviews and informal conversations to grasp place-specific complex social dynamics by "being there" on the ground (Millar 2014; Koopman 2014; Autusserre 2014a; Moore 2013; Lubkemann 2008; Nordstrom 2004; Manz 2004; Woods 2003; Sluka 2000; Rosaldo 1989). Recognizing the particular challenges of ethnographic and long-term research in situations of conflict or political violence, I am informed by what many anthropologists call "fieldwork under fire" (Robben & Nordstrom, 1995; Sluka, 1995; Manz, 2004) to better understand the realities of those who are on the front lines. This said, I took careful precautions in the protection of my interlocutors, myself, and research data. I acknowledge and studied a range of possible security consequences in conducting research in an environment with an active armed conflict. In the context of intensifying political vilification and criminalization of indigenous peoples as well as human rights defenders and political opposition as 'terrorists' or 'communist sympathizers' and a well-documented culture of impunity in the Philippines, I took careful considerations of the conduct of my research and gave priority to the safety of my interlocutors and myself. I also conceal the personal information of my interlocutors, except for key public personalities and government officials

who provided consent in releasing their names, to prevent any instances that could compromise the security of my interlocutors, their family and community.

Outline of chapters

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The first, this introductory chapter, outlines the theoretical and empirical motivations of the investigation and provides a summary of research methods used in the conduct of the research. The second chapter, "Insurgent Peace: Community-led Peace Zone of Indigenous Peoples of Sagada, Philippines", examines the processes through which the indigenous peoples' community of the municipality of Sagada protect their own lives in the context of an active armed conflict and beyond the purview of the state and rebels. This chapter presents the case of Sagada as a peace zone and the kinds of work community leaders and members do in effectively regulating military and rebel operations and preventing conflict-related civilian deaths and internal displacement. Situated within the 'local turn' in peacebuilding and existing literature on peace zones, this chapter proposes an alternative understanding of a community-led peace zone and the daily upkeep it requires from the indigenous community of Sagada, and what these processes tell us about peace. This chapter has been peer-reviewed and accepted for publication in *Geopolitics.*

The third chapter, "Suspicion and Ethnographic Peace Research (Notes from a Local Researcher)", focuses upon the notion of suspicion as a lens to better understand the distinct challenges that local researchers from the Global South encounter in ethnographic fieldwork when studying peace and peacebuilding in the context of active armed conflict within their countries. Over the last decade, scholars have increasingly deployed ethnographic approaches to better understand peacebuilding, devoting careful attention to local actors and processes that shape the practices and outcomes of international peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict

environments in the Global South. While this 'local turn' in peace research has led towards a

renewed awareness of the challenges in ethnographic fieldwork in situations of war, armed

conflict and political violence, most of the conversations in the emergent literature on

ethnographic peace research focus upon and draw from the experiences of researchers from the

Global North who conduct ethnographic research in the Global South. Begging to be considered

in the EPR literature are the experiences of local researchers from the Global South who are

immersed in ethnographic research in their countries, and what these experiences tell us about

the differential politics in ethnographic research. This chapter has been peer-reviewed and

published in *International Peacekeeping* (Macaspac 2017).

The fourth chapter, "Geography and Peace: Insurgent Peace as Spatial Power",

examines the concept of peace as an object of study in Geography and integrates the emergent

subfield of Geographies of Peace with the 'spatial turn' in critical interdisciplinary peace

literature. This chapter underscores the growing recognition of researchers on the role of

geography in the emergence of peace, as well as the spatial dimensions of peace. Further,

drawing from the spatial practices of the indigenous community of Sagada in maintaining the

peace zone, this chapter argues that peace can be viewed as a form of spatial power that

peripheral communities mobilize in carving out alternative geopolitical spaces to disrupt

violence and protect their lives. This chapter has been peer-reviewed and being revised for a

journal.

Finally, the fifth chapter summarizes the findings of the dissertation, reiterating the

key arguments of re-conceptualizing peace as insurgent peace to refer to a set of spatial

relationships and form of spatial power that simultaneously disrupt the spatial logics of

violence and transform political relationships. Further, the concluding chapter underscores the

necessity of approaching the study of peace by attending to community-led peace practices, which reveal the daily work and quotidian practices of civilian communities in imagining and enacting peace. The concluding chapter also highlights a related area of research that emerged from this dissertation, specifically around the concept and practice of sanctuary to refer to places that provide protections to particular vulnerable groups of people.

CHAPTER 2

INSURGENT PEACE: COMMUNITY-LED PEACEBUILDING OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

IN SAGADA, PHILIPPINES

Introduction

In a global era when most wars are fought between state and non-state actors, how do people make peace? This article adds to the contributions in this Special Issue by understanding the ways in which civilian communities imagine and build peace during an active armed conflict beyond the purview of state and non-state actors. It presents a case of a "demilitarized" community—popularly understood as a "peace zone"—of the indigenous peoples community[12] of the Municipality of Sagada in the Philippines' Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in the context of nearly five decades of armed conflict between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and Communist Party of the Philippines, New People's Army, and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (CPP-NPA-NDFP). For almost 30 years, the indigenous community of Sagada has effectively regulated military and rebel operations and disarmed the local police, preventing conflict-related civilian deaths and internal displacement. While existing research identifies Sagada as a pioneer model of the phenomenon of peace zones in the world (Avruch and Jose 2007), we know very little of the community work that sustains this model.

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[12] Indigenous identity in the Philippines refers to ethnolinguistic communities who were able to retain significant aspects of their customs, traditions and social organization throughout over three centuries of Western colonialism. The Philippine Constitution of 1987 refers to these communities as "indigenous cultural communities." The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 defines indigenous cultural communities and Indigenous Peoples as "a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos." Indigenous peoples compose between ten and twenty percent of the national population in the Philippines.

Situated within the "local turn" in peacebuilding and emergent field of peace geographies, this article seeks to understand community-led processes of maintaining a peace zone amid an active war, and what these processes tell us about peace.

In the last fifteen years, scholars have focused on "local peacebuilding" on account of the limits of international peacebuilding projects in sustaining peace in many places around the world (Autesserre 2014a; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Chandler 2010; Richmond 2008). In this article I do not summarize the arguments and empirical evidence behind the limits of international peacebuilding projects already published by scholars in the last decade (see Duffield 2001; Paris 2002; Pugh 2005; Richmond 2005; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2007; Richmond 2011; Lemay-Hébert 2013; Autesserre 2014a). I also do not recap the debates around the liberal peace framework and its components of representative democracy, elections, rule of law, human rights, and neoliberal market economy as fundamental indices of peace as envisioned by the United Nations (U.N.) (see Richmond 2016; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2014; Chandler 2010; Richmond 2006). Rather, I highlight the ways in which the "local turn" foregrounds the importance of a deeper understanding of community actors, context, and processes as key elements toward a culturally relevant and sustainable peace. Indeed, the scholarly attention toward "local peacebuilding" has produced fine-grained empirical detail of daily practices of international peacebuilding practitioners that shape the outcomes of peacebuilding projects in communities in the Global South (Autesserre 2014b), examined the consequences of international peacebuilding interventions within community beneficiaries (Millar 2016), and analyzed socio-spatial and temporal sources of international peacebuilding efforts with varying outcomes at the sub-national level (Moore 2013). However, most research on "local peacebuilding" remains focused on "national" actors and processes (Autesserre 2014a)

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rather than actors from civilian communities and community-led practices. There also is a tendency among scholars to view "local" and "international" processes as mutually exclusive, with the former, specifically referring to 'indigenous' processes, oftentimes romanticized as a 'secret ingredient' of sustainable and participatory peace that the latter lacks (Mac Ginty 2008). Meanwhile, geographers have taken the task of re-examining the concept of peace from its dominant negative definition of an absence of physical, structural, and cultural violence (Galtung 1969; 1985; 1990). First, geographers contend that "peace means different things at different scales, as well as to different groups and at different times and places" (Koopman 2014: 111), akin to an understanding of intractable armed conflicts as shaped by causes and narratives that change over time and across space (Agnew 1989). Second, geographers extend the meaning of peace to encompass positive values of justice, co-existence, friendship (Williams and McConnell 2011), solidarity (Koopman 2011), anti-violence (Loyd 2012), non-killing (Tyner and Inwood 2011), equality (Ross 2011), and ecological dignity through solidarity networks (Courtheyn 2017). Finally, geographers contend that the boundaries between war and peace are blurred (Kobayashi 2009; Flint 2005; Flint and Kirsch 2012), challenging a popular understanding of peace as an endpoint in a *telos* of war and revealing how peace takes place in the everyday (Williams 2007; Megoran 2011; McConnell, Megoran, and Williams 2014).

Building upon these recent contributions to our understanding of peacebuilding and peace, this article looks at one form of peacebuilding: the maintenance of a community-led peace zone during an active war. I use the term *community-led* rather than "local" to highlight the specificities of initiatives of civilian communities in protecting their own lives as distinct processes from peacebuilding projects of state and non-state actors, the UN, non-government organizations (NGOs) or civil society organizations (CSOs). I also use community-led to

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differentiate community peace practices from the category of "local peacebuilding" that

scholars and peace practitioners use to refer to localized implementation of international

peacebuilding and humanitarian projects in mostly post-conflict situations. At stake in this

article is a re-conceptualization of peace and peacebuilding as state-led, expert-driven, and

technical projects of conflict transformation. My research reveals that peace also relies upon the

daily, complex, and inventive work of civilian communities in protecting their own lives during

an active armed conflict between state and non-state actors. With an ethnographic focus on

what I call *insurgent peace,* I argue that peace also can be understood as dynamic processes

rooted upon a refusal and disruption by marginalized groups of the social and spatial logics of

violence imposed upon by structures of power. Insurgent peace captures the daily practices and

work required from marginalized groups in protecting their own lives, foregrounding the

processes through which civilian communities carve alternative political spaces, transform

relations of power, and enact peaceful futures in the everyday beyond the purview of state and

non-state actors. Seeing peace as collective processes of disrupting violence and transforming

power relations in order to assert their lives as marginalized groups diverges from the popular

definition of peace as absence of violence and enables several important interventions. First, the

concept of insurgent peace draws attention to the fact that peace is not only a "top-down"

project of conflict resolution designed and implemented by people who work in offices, but

rather as daily practices of marginalized groups in imagining and enacting alternative peaceful

futures within social conditions that threaten their lives and survival. Second, insurgent peace

captures the ways in which indigenous peoples or other marginalized groups can refuse and

disrupt violence rooted upon an acknowledgement of their sovereignty that co-exists in parallel

with, not beneath or subjected to, the sovereignty of state and non-state actors. The paradox of

international and national peace projects is that peace is produced either through a military strategy, in containing, defeating or eliminating armed opposition, or by way of institutional reforms that promote liberal democratic values, representative democracy, and a capitalist market economy that rely upon and generate unequal social and economic relations of power. Meanwhile, the challenges faced by international or national NGOs and CSOs with their peace projects is that peace is produced by expert practitioners in the field of conflict resolution and post-conflict development, largely relies on external funding, and is shaped by specific political, cultural, economic, and security agenda and programmatic priorities of a variety of social institutions including governments, military and other armed groups, universities, churches, banks, philanthropic donors, and corporations. I am not discrediting institutional peace projects but rather pointing out that other visions and projects of peace also are being produced through practices of marginalized groups that may lie outside the purview of state and non-state actors, NGOs, and other institutions. Further, I posit that peace can also have a sense of meaning beyond "non-violence". Collective actions of marginalized groups that aim to protect their own lives through non-armed struggles are commonly understood as "non-violent resistance" and as form of grassroots politics. However, in situations of extreme violence or a prolonged period of war and marginalization where social conditions do not permit the emergence of any "grassroots" or organized movements "from below", I suggest that insurgent peace captures the quotidian work of marginalized communities in refusing violence as well as the productive dimensions of these practices such as producing spaces of peace during war that are often obscured within the framework of "resistance".

To develop these conceptual arguments, I examine the processes through which the indigenous community of Sagada maintains the legitimacy of the peace zone in the context of

an active armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. Through an ethnographic study conducted within six cumulative months in 2014 and 2016, I observed and participated in informal conversations among community members in Sagada and observed the meetings of the *Sangguniang Bayan* (SB) or the municipal legislative council to better understand the ways in which community policies are produced and the interactions between local government officials, community leaders and members. I also conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with fifteen interlocutors comprising of municipal officials including the mayor, vice mayor, a former mayor, tribal leaders, community organizers, a former rebel, a retired bishop, the police chief, and community members. During the interviews, I asked questions to better understand the socio-political and economic, cultural and historical context that led the indigenous community to make Sagada as a peace zone, key challenges and achievements of community initiatives in protecting civilian lives during active war, daily life in the community, understandings of peace, and individual and community aspirations. In selecting interlocutors, I purposively sought referrals starting with tribal elders and community leaders, to "start at the top, with the most prestigious person in the group being studied" (Sluka 2012, 288). I found this approach helpful during preliminary research because it is consistent with customary practices of tribal elders and community officials to meet with non-tribal members who are visiting Sagada on an official capacity. To better understand the emergence of the community initiative to demilitarize Sagada, I also examined foundational documents of the peace zone including municipal resolutions, community petitions and transcripts of community meetings and dialogues with the military and rebels that are archived in the SB office to which I was accorded access by the municipal government. Finally, in conducting ethnographic peace research during an active war I recognize the possible security consequences that suspicion from either armed

actors can impose upon research interlocutors and ethnographer (Macaspac 2017). Throughout this article, except for public officials, I conceal the personal information of my interlocutors that could jeopardize their security and their community. This said, anyone with the intention to compromise the security of my interlocutors could do so despite strict precautions in the conduct of my research.

The first part of the article focuses on the concept of peace zones and ways in which scholars have understood the phenomenon as an approach to security and peacebuilding in the context of armed conflict, specifically as wartime agency. I then examine the notion of a "zone" to recast the concept of peace zones away from a static demilitarized and neutral geographic area often invoked in the literature toward a set of dynamic processes enacted by marginalized communities in carving out spaces of peace and building peaceful futures amid an ongoing war to protect their own lives. The second part offers an overview of the geography of war and peace in the Philippines, providing context to readers who may not be familiar with the conditions of insurgency and counterinsurgency and attending to the specific consequences of armed conflict to the lives of indigenous peoples in the country. The third part presents empirical data drawn from research conducted in Sagada. I illustrate the emergence of the community-led peace zone, consequences, and processes through which the indigenous community's efforts of maintaining a peace zone disrupt the spatial logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency. I also discuss the ways in which existing studies of peace zones in the country tend to emphasize the role of external organizations in the creation of peace zones, highlighting a need to attend to the daily work of marginalized communities in producing and maintaining these zones. In the fourth part, I focus upon salient categories of internal norms, interdependence, and refusal that my interlocutors refer to in explaining the work they do to

protect their own lives beyond the purview of state and non-state actors. Drawing from these processes, I conceptualize what I term insurgent peace to foreground community-led peace practices as processes of refusal of violence and reconfiguration of political relationships between marginalized communities and structures of power. I conclude with a brief summary of the implications of this study for our understanding of peace zones, community-led and indigenous peace practices, and potential themes for succeeding studies on peacebuilding and peace.

Peace zones

Peace zones are popularly understood as demilitarized geographic areas where civilians and non-combatants are protected from consequences of armed conflict based on a set of regulations and norms. Regulations can range from enforcing restrictions on armed violence to enacting policies of neutrality toward all armed groups involved in a conflict. Article 14, 15, and 23 of the 1949 Geneva Convention declared hospitals in areas where war exists as "neutralized zones" to provide refuge to civilians, non-combatants, and wounded and sick combatants (UN 1949). In 1970, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 2675 that declared "places or areas designated for the sole protection of civilians, such as hospital zones or similar refuges, should not be the object of military operations" at any time and anywhere there is armed conflict or violence (UN 1970). Over the last six decades at least twenty-five countries have codified and enacted the principle of demarcating particular geographic areas as demilitarized and neutral zones where civilians and non-combatants are guaranteed their fundamental rights to life (International Committee for the Red Cross 2017).

The majority of peace zones are created and maintained by the UN in coordination with national governments and military forces. In the 1990s, the UN has routinely established

different iterations of these zones in conflict situations in the Global South. In El Salvador, the

UN created and monitored "designated assembly zones" to facilitate the disarmament and

demobilization of forces of *Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN) as part of the

peace process in 1992 (Hancock and Iyer 2007). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UN created

"safe areas" as a mechanism to protect Muslims from the attacks of Bosnian Serbs in 1993 (see

Toal and Dahlman 2011). States acting as parties to peace processes and acting independently

from UN also have been assigning particular geographic areas as demilitarized zones. More

recently, the governments of Turkey, Russia and Iran, parties to the Syria peace talks, agreed to

create "de-escalation zones" in Syria in 2017 to provide security to 15 million people affected by

civil war (Al Jazeerah 2017). Finally, CSOs and NGOs also have adopted the idea of creating

"peace communities" and "neutral communities" to mitigate the impact of armed conflicts

among civilian communities (Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Rojas 2004). In Colombia, REDEPAZ

(*Red Nacional de Iniciativas Ciudadanas por la Paz y contra la Guerra*) or the Network of Initiatives

for Peace and Against War, a Bogota-based NGO, led a movement to declare "100 Municipalities

of Peace" in 1993 as a response to the armed conflict between the state and *Fuerzas Armadas*

Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (Rojas 2007). In the Philippines, an agglomeration of CSOs

and NGOs under the Coalition for Peace (CfP) formed peace zones beginning in the late 1980s

to address the insurgency and counterinsurgency between the Philippine state and non-state

armed actors including CPP-NPA-NDFP and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) (Lee and

Gastardo-Conaco 1994; Garcia 1997; Iyer 2004; Santos 2005; Colonel-Ferrer 2005; Avruch and

Jose 2007).

Typology

There are three common types of peace zones. Landon Hancock and Pushpa Iyer (2007) categorize peace zones based on security objectives, stage of the armed conflict and state-led peace process, and key actors involved in the creation of these zones. First, peace zones formed during armed conflict are meant to eliminate the impact of armed violence on civilian populations. These zones are primarily formed to protect non-combatants through a set of restrictions that prevent armed violence from taking place within designated geographic areas. Success of these zones relies upon a high level of civilian community participation and ownership and less from government direction or support. Other variations of these zones aim toward effective aid delivery, relief, and humanitarian operations. Second, peace zones formed during an active peace process primarily function as "safe areas" for any of the armed actors party to the peace negotiations. These zones are usually formed to facilitate disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants, and are operational within a limited time period. Success of these zones relies upon the active support of both state and non-state actors and less from civilian communities. Finally, peace zones formed within post-conflict environments address human rights violations and economic and social development within communities that were affected by armed violence. Success of these zones relies upon a partnership between state, non-state actors and civilian communities.

Wartime agency

While the existing typology of peace zones illuminates our understanding of the range of objectives and actors mobilized in creating these zones, the literature tends to present peace zones as fixed neutral and safe areas where violence ends and peace begins, or where peace can be locally contained while the rest of the country is at war. However, recent studies of peace

zones that examine the phenomenon through the lens of wartime agency reveal that these zones

are never static, but rather dynamic and transitory spaces that rely upon constant negotiations

over security, territory, and power. Cécile Mouly, Annette Idler and Belén Garrido (2015) argue

that a key feature of peace zones is the ability of community members in compelling armed

actors to follow certain rules as a way of mitigating the effects of the armed conflict within the

community. In Cacarica, Colombia, Victoria Sanford (2010: 109) argues that community

members have to constantly refuse the presence of armed groups because "if the army enters a

community, the residents become a guerrilla target, and if the guerrillas enter the community,

the residents become targets of the paramilitaries and the army." Meanwhile, in the peace

community of San José de Apartadó, also in Colombia, Juan Masullo (2015: 33) posits that

community members rely upon a set of episodic, modular, innovative, and highly contentious

practices to bolster the community's neutrality and non-cooperation to armed actors.

Community members enact disruptive, contained, and routinized actions such as mass protests

against armed groups, writing petitions and letters, releasing reports of conflict-related human

rights violations, and regular community meetings to protect them from the consequences of

armed violence. Examining the social practices through which community members remember

those who died from conflict-related violence in San José de Apartadó, Christopher Courtheyn

(2016: 943) also argues that community practices such as building a "memory museum" and

"stone victims monument" illustrate the ways in which the community "denounces political

violence and re-asserts an alternative politics", contributing toward the community's

"alternative non-state peace project" and enactment of an alternative territory. Courtheyn's

(2016) attention to community commemorations within the peace communities also underscores

"war's embodied reality" and the ways in which community members reinforce an "anti-

violence ethic and practice." Meanwhile, Catalina Rojas (2004) suggests that the phenomenon of

peace communities allows community members to move away from a narrative of

"victimhood", commonly mobilized when studying communities affected by prolonged armed

conflicts, toward a story of resilience. Rojas (2004: 72) argues that peace communities illustrate

the ways in which community members are "reacquiring spaces for peace" and becoming

empowered agents in the resolution of armed conflicts in their countries.

Recasting peace zones

Interestingly, most case studies of peace zones have proceeded without an explicit

examination of the notion of a "zone" and what the concept of peace zones tell us about the

sociality and spatiality of peace. To further understand the phenomenon of peace zones and its

implications to our understanding of peace, I draw upon Eyal Weizman's (2005) examination of

zones as spaces commonly exempted from local, national or international law, or not governed

by law at all. Weizman (2005) argues that duty-free zones, free trade zones, export processing

zones, special economic zones, safety zones, humanitarian zones, and other variations of zones

function as what Keller Easterling (2014) refers to as extraterritorial enclaves or spaces that are

above or outside any jurisdiction, where the rule of law is suspended under a state of exception

(see also Franke and Weizman 2003). As infrastructures, zones are modular, replicable, and

governed by multiple forces beyond the state. Drawing from her investigation of free trade

zones, Easterling (2012: 15) argues that zones are better understood as "extrastatecraft" or

undeclared forms of polity that exist "both *outside of* and *in addition to* statecraft", yet with the

necessary authority to produce and maintain these infrastructures. Easterling's

conceptualization of zones as extrastatecraft allows us to attend to the ways in which

community-led peace zones are maintained beyond the purview of the state, delinking territory

from state sovereignty (Courtheyn 2017b; see also Agnew 1994; Agnew and Corbridge 1995) as well re-thinking peace beyond its dominant understanding as an exclusive state project.

In recasting peace zones as extrastate spaces, we can better attend to the prefigurative dimensions of peace zones. While most case studies of peace zones frame the social processes that animate these zones through what James Scott (2008) refers to as "everyday forms of resistance", directing our attention to power relationships and subaltern agency during active war (see also Ortner 1995), this framework does not fully capture the transformative consequences of community initiatives maintaining the peace zones. Jeffrey Juris and Marina Sitrin (2016: 32) remind us that "resistance" carries an "exclusively negative and defensive focus", obscuring the creative and productive dimensions of grassroots collective action. Thus, other scholars of social movements refer to grassroots agency and politics as "practice movements" (Eckert 2015; Bayat 2013; Holston 2008) and "prefigurative politics" (Kurik 2016; Graeber 2013; Leach 2013; Sitrin 2012; Olin Wright 2010) to reveal the projective dimensions of collective action among marginalized populations in exploring workable alternatives of the future. These works allow us to attend to the ways in which community-led peace zones operate as what Weizman (2005) calls "self-governing enclaves" that carry the potential to defy the absolute authority of the state, but also the "world-making potentialities" (Muñoz 2009) that are evident within the quotidian work by marginalized communities in confronting hegemonic politics. Let me now turn to discuss an overview of the armed conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP.

War and peace in the Philippines

For almost half a century, CPP-NPA-NDFP have been pursuing a Maoist-inspired insurgency since 1969 to seize political power "from the countryside to the cities" and establish

a "national democratic" state with a socialist perspective rooted on a critique of Philippine

political economy as neocolonial and semi-feudal dominated by landed ruling elites and

political dynasties (Guerrero 1971; Holden 2012; Santos, Jr. and Santos 2011). In 2016, NPA

claimed to have influence in over 70 out of 81 provinces, with members operating in 80 percent

of Philippine territory (NPA 2016). Meanwhile, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reports a

steady reduction in NPA membership, decreasing from over 25,000 in 1987 to 4,800 members in

2009 operating in 60 guerrilla fronts across the country (AFP 2010). International Crisis Group

(ICG) also estimates NPA strength to be around 5,000 with members engaged with recruitment,

acquisition of weapons, and ambushes in mountainous and neglected areas across the

Philippines (ICG 2011). Scholars estimate over 43,000 civilians have died throughout the course

of almost fifty years of insurgency and counterinsurgency (Holden 2013; Quimpo 2008).

In 1987, the post-dictatorship government of Corazon Aquino, amid democratic

reforms in the country after two decades of martial law under Ferdinand Marcos and after

initiating peace talks with CPP-NPA-NDFP, launched a "total war" to eliminate NPA's

organizational base and recover NPA-controlled areas (UNPO 1995; Ferrer and Cabangbang

2012). Succeeding administrations under Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada also implemented

total war policies against CPP-NPA-NDFP. "Total war" refers to an absolute military solution

comprising of military deployment against armed combatants and civilian communities to

subjugate and eliminate armed opposition (Bobis 2011). A shift in the Philippine state's

counterinsurgency took place under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who embraced the post-9/11

"global war on terror" approach, labeling the NPA as "communist-terrorists" (Banlaoi 2010).

This move was preceded by a lobby of the Arroyo government to the US government in 2002 for

the latter to include the CPP and NPA in the list of foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) as basis

for an increase in Foreign Military Fund (FMF) from the US military to help counterinsurgency efforts in the Philippines (Macaspac 2013). Subsequently, AFP implemented a re-engineered counterinsurgency plan called *Oplan Bantay Laya* (OBL) or Operation Freedom Watch, aiming to eliminate the insurgency in two years from 2002 (Chua 2006). Moving away from solely targeting NPA combatants, that failed to eliminate the insurgency in previous decades, AFP revised its counterinsurgency approach by dismantling civilian support for the insurgency in rural and urban areas across the country. In "Knowing the Enemy: Are We Missing the Point?", a PowerPoint presentation prepared by the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security (COC-IS) leaked to the public in 2005, AFP illustrates its aims to neutralize civil society, activist groups, and grassroots organizations who the military identified as "front organizations" of CPP-NPA-NDFP (Holden 2012). Military experts from the US Army acknowledge the successful results of the strategy, noting how the shift toward the "human domain of warfare" is a successful example of the "responsibility to protect and enforce human security" that ultimately results to winning an armed conflict (Beaudette 2013: 14). Meanwhile, local and international human rights organizations have a different assessment. In a series of reports submitted to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in the UN Human Rights Council, *Karapatan*, a national network of human rights organizations in the Philippines, identified hundreds of cases of extra-judicial killing, enforced disappearance, illegal arrest and detention, torture, forcible evacuation, gender-based violence, threatening of civilians listed by the military under an "order of battle", and other human rights violations committed with impunity against human rights defenders, activists, women and children, indigenous peoples, and the general population (Karapatan 2012; 2008).

State-centric peace process

      While peace talks between the Philippine state and CPP-NPA-NDFP have been held in

the last two decades, these bilateral talks have been largely intermittent and inconclusive (Bell

and Farahnoosh 2015). Preliminary talks began under Aquino in 1987 while formal peace

negotiations started under Ramos in 1995, culminating with the signing of the Comprehensive

Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) in

1998 that recognizes the status of CPP-NPA-NDFP as a belligerent sovereign actor in conflict

with the Philippine state and obliges both parties to observe the provisions of the Geneva

Conventions on the protocols of war (Espejo 2009). The agreement also provides for the creation

of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) composed of six members in which the GRP and

NDFP has three representatives to ensure compliance to international protocols of war, and

confront, remedy, and prevent human rights violations in the course of the conflict (JMC 2004).

Despite this advancement in the peace process, the negotiations were terminated under Estrada

who declared a unilateral suspension of the negotiations after the NPA captured military

officials in 2001. The NPA released the military officials on humanitarian grounds and as an act

of good will to continue with the peace process, but eventually acknowledged the termination

of the peace negotiations after Estrada signed the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) granting

unlimited access to the US military to all ports and airports in the Philippines. Negotiations

resumed under Macapagal-Arroyo in 2001, but were stalled again in 2004 after CPP and NPA

were listed as foreign terrorist organizations by the US and the European Union (EU). Further

discussions of the agenda, including socio-economic reforms, political and constitutional

reforms, the end of hostilities, and the disposition of forces, that had been laid out in previous

peace negotiations were suspended. While back channel talks resumed under the succeeding

government of Benigno Aquino III in 2011, peace negotiations did not formally resume until the assumption to the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte in 2016. Duterte re-constituted the government's negotiating panel and, in an unprecedented move, invited CPP to nominate its members for potential cabinet positions in his government (see Capistrano 2016). To bolster confidence, both parties declared an indefinite ceasefire that eventually was retracted after the GRP refused to release hundreds of political prisoners arrested under the Marcos dictatorship and after the NPA engaged in an armed encounter with the AFP. Negotiations were finally suspended in 2017 after Duterte declared a unilateral withdrawal from the talks and announced the re-tagging of CPP-NPA-NDFP as a "terrorist organization" (Mendez 2017). In 2018 Duterte declared that "just like drugs", alluding to the government's "war on drugs" that resulted to the killing of over 12,000 drug suspects (Human Rights Watch 2018), his government will "destroy the NPA" (CNN 2018).

The repeated collapse of peace talks between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP highlights some of the challenges of a kind of peace attained through negotiations between state and non-state actors. Peace negotiations between two states or state and non-state actors are highly complex geopolitical processes that usually take place over a long period of time. Through negotiations, peace is produced through legal processes with lengthy paper trails that require technical expertise in conflict management and resolution and support from the international community (Barak 2005; Selby 2008). In an ideal situation, both parties at war will arrive at a mutual understanding of the root causes of the armed conflict and with that understanding formulate agreements that lay out comprehensive solutions to end the armed conflict and achieve sustainable peace (Ocampo 2011). This said, peace negotiations are focused on

comprehensive and structural political and economic reforms and often exclude community-led peace practices or peace initiatives of marginalized groups from the formal agenda.

Indigenous lives

Indigenous peoples are among the most affected by intermittent peace negotiations between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. On the one hand, the suspension of peace negotiations and non-resolution of the root causes of the armed conflict would allow the NPA to persist in many places of extreme poverty around the country (Holden 2013). On the other, indigenous peoples would remain targets of counterinsurgency, particularly since AFP has labeled indigenous communities as "hotbeds" and "stable base areas" of the NPA (Chua 2006). Further, the Duterte administration's implementation of martial law in Mindanao from 2017 to 2018, the longest period of military rule in the country since the Marcos regime, to neutralize Islamic militants and communist rebels, placed indigenous communities at risk of displacement, suffering, and death. UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz from the Cordillera region in the Philippines, and Special Rapporteur on internal displacement Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, have cautioned the Duterte administration about the "irreversible effects" of the violations of the rights of indigenous peoples that result from the militarization of indigenous communities under martial law (Reuters 2017). Tauli-Corpuz (2016) also reminds us that indigenous communities are disproportionately affected by armed conflicts and "have long been exploited for political use by all parties to the conflict". While indigenous peoples are the most affected by insurgency and counterinsurgency, their perspectives on peace and peacebuilding practices are rarely woven into the formal peace processes between state and non-state actors.

Sagada as a peace zone

In Sagada, the consequences of the intractable conflict between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP compelled community members to protect their own lives. In 1989 community leaders and members demanded from the AFP and NPA to leave Sagada. One of ten municipalities of Mountain Province in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Sagada has an estimated population of 11,000, predominantly of the Kankana-ey ethnolinguistic group and indigenous community who also self-identify as Igorot, iSagada, Kankana-ey, and i-Applai (for a historical overview of Sagada and the Cordillera region, see Scott 1988; 1974; Finnin 2005; Fry 2006; Keesing 1962). Sagada shares provincial boundaries with Abra in the north and Ilocos Sur in the east. Its location in relation to the tri-boundary area of largely mossy and pine forests and an elevation as high as 5,000 feet above sea level is a significant site for both NPA and AFP in maintaining influence among indigenous communities in the Cordillera region and nearby lowland communities of the Ilocos region. In 1987, NPA held an assembly in Sagada during a sixty-day national ceasefire under the Aquino government to mark the first round of peace talks between GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. Many community members recall a parade of NPA commanders and members at the *poblacion* (town center) where a large crowd gathered to see a native of Sagada who, at that time, was among the highest ranking NPA cadres (personal interview 2014). When the ceasefire ended, military battalions occupied the Municipal Hall and Central Elementary School in Sagada. One of the community leaders, a young school teacher at that time, recalls an important event that led to the community's demand to demilitarize Sagada in 1988:

> "There were rampant encounters between AFP and NPA in and around our
> community. It came to a point when there were civilian victims in these encounters.

A drunken soldier fired indiscriminately in broad daylight in front of the public

market, killing two children. Another child was hit from a stray bullet coming from

the site of the encounter when NPA attacked the military encampment in one of our

schools here. Community members felt uncomfortable going to their rice fields due

to AFP and NPA presence. People protested and conducted an indignation rally at

the Municipal Plaza and that was the time when we announced that AFP and NPA

should pull out from Sagada" (personal interview 2014).

Subsequently, a group of community leaders led by Thomas "Champag" Killip, Sagada's vice

mayor at that time, led the Municipal Peace Committee (MPC), an *ad hoc* group composed of

lallakay (tribal elders), municipal officials, women leaders, community organizers, teachers, and

church officials from the community's Episcopalian Church. The MPC wrote a "12-Point Town

Resolution and Plea for the Demilitarization of Sagada" laying out community regulations over

the conduct of armed conflict in Sagada that I include here in full to provide clarity amid

contestation from both armed actors over the legitimacy of the community's efforts of

demilitarization:

1) Total pull out of all armed groups within the geographical jurisdiction of Sagada
   Municipality;

2) No detachments from both the AFP and the NPA should be assigned in the
   geographical area of Sagada;

3) No fighting should be done inside and within the geographical area of Sagada;

4) No carrying of firearms and other deadly weapons inside and within the
   jurisdiction of Sagada;

5)	No harassment, intimidation, illegal arrests, illegal searches and other criminal

	acts by the contending forces on the civilian population;

6)	That Sagada be a designated area for peaceful negotiations;

7)	Safe conduct for all wounded or killed on either side;

8)	Safe conduct for medical rescue teams to battle areas, be they civilians, vehicles,

	etc.;

9)	Safe treatment and hospitalization for any wounded or injured on either side

	inside Sagada and safe conduct going out;

10)	Respect and observance of customs and cultural practices;

11)	Investigation of suspects should be conducted with the participation of the

	people. No torture or killing of suspects;

12)	Complaints from either side referred to duly constituted committees or civil

	court authorities (Office of the Sangguniang Bayan 1989).

Community leaders also enforced a ban on alcohol and a 7 PM curfew for residents and visitors

in Sagada. Community regulations also prohibited the carrying of firearms among municipal

police officers. These community-led efforts led to a withdrawal of state security forces in 1989,

only leaving behind an eight-member police force of mostly iSagada or members of neighboring

indigenous communities within Mountain Province (Peace Zone Technical Committee of the

Multisectoral Peace Advocates 1991).

Peace zones in the Philippines

	The community's demand to demilitarize Sagada was later framed as a "peace zone" by

an NGO called the Coalition for Peace (CfP). CfP was formed in 1986 as a "vehicle of citizen

participation in the peace process" during the Aquino administration (Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 15).

Along with other people's organizations (POs), NGOs, and institutions that advocated for peace and human security in the Philippines in the late 1980s, CfP emerged amid the democratic reforms that were taking place in the country inspired by the EDSA People Power Revolution that peacefully toppled the Marcos dictatorship (Garcia 1997; Coronel-Ferrer 2005; Santos 2005). CfP defines a peace zone as "a geographic area within which war and any other forms of armed hostility may no longer be waged, and where peacebuilding programs will address roots and manifestations of the conflict in the community" (Garcia and Hernandez 1989, cited in Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 10). Similar to the experience of Sagada, most peace zones were formed in response to experiences of direct violence that triggered community demands for a pull out of armed personnel and a ban on detachments and armed operations. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (2005) identifies two waves of the emergence of peace zones in the Philippines. The first wave took place from 1980s to 1990s "mostly in areas affected by the communist insurgency" while the second wave happened from 1998 to 2005 "mostly in areas affected by the Moro insurgencies" (Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 13). With the growing number of peace zones in the country —in Mindanao alone around 50 communities declared themselves as peace zones supported by NGOs (Santos 2005)—a 2016 proposed legislation is now pending at the House of Representatives for a national policy on peace zones that will ensure the "integrity and autonomy of this valuable Filipino innovation and contribution to peace-building" (Philippine House of Representatives 2016; Santos 2004).

While peace zones have become a national phenomenon in the Philippines, with the notion of a peace zone turning into a "generic name" to refer to local initiatives of violence mitigation (Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 10), scholars make a distinction between "symbolic" and "genuine" peace zones to differentiate the range of motivations and actors mobilized in creating

them. For example, Coronel-Ferrer (2005) suggests that schools, cities, and provinces declared peace zones by local government officials are more symbolic and tend to be unsustainable. Meanwhile, Soliman Santos (2004: 43) posits that "genuine" peace zones "come from the community, usually a grassroots community caught in the life-and-death crossfire of armed conflict". Further, Santos (2005) argues that government-created and military-supported peace zones "have been criticized as distortions of what otherwise should be people-initiated peace zones" (cited in Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 14). While these distinctions are important to better understand the different frameworks and agenda between peace zones that are led by NGOs working with civilian communities for armed conflict mitigation and those that are created by the government and enforced by the military for counterinsurgency, there remains a need to understand peace zones that are largely maintained by civilian communities without significant support from external NGOs. Scholarly analysis tends to focus on the role of CSOs and NGOs in creating peace zones. While the "peace constituency" or "Peace CSOs" in the Philippines, composed of peace-related NGOs, institutions, and foundations (Coronel-Ferrer 2005: 6), play a crucial role in "generating the national consensus on the needed reforms and the process of achieving peace by way of peace", analysis focusing primarily on interventions of mostly city-based NGOs glosses over the complex work of marginalized communities in remote villages who deal with the consequences of intermittent armed violence on a daily basis, often without institutional funding, international support, or media publicity. Second, another tendency in the existing scholarship is attributing the emergence of peace zones as responses to either communist or Islamic insurgency, rather than recognizing that community-led demilitarization efforts—highlighted in the case of Sagada—were in response to consequences of *both* insurgency and counterinsurgency. Finally, while scholars largely attribute the emergence of the peace zone

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in Sagada to the CfP, community leaders posit that the NGO's role was nominal and, to an extent, had mixed consequences. Killip recalls only meeting "peace foundations" including CfP and Ateneo de Manila University's Gaston Ortigas Peace Institute during his visit in Manila along with other community elders, to demand a recognition of the community's efforts to demilitarize Sagada from national government and military officials (personal interview 2014). Efforts of Killip and other indigenous leaders who travelled from Sagada all the way to Manila to demand peace for their community attracted national attention and the notion of a Sagada peace zone became popular in the media, leading to mixed results. On the one hand, the community received a one-time funding of 5 million pesos as Special Development Funds in 1993, as part of a Senate resolution to aid the development of eight communities across the country that became known as peace zone communities: Sagada, Bangilo, Cantomanyog, Tulunan, New Alimodia, Miatub, Bituan, and Nabundasan (Philippine Senate 1993). On the other, the NPA used the notion of peace zones to delegitimize community demands for a pull out of all armed groups, criticizing the CfP as an NGO that "rode on" Sagada's campaign of demilitarization and "immediately adopted Sagada as its showcase" (Montana 1990).

Beyond neutrality

Contrary to popular depictions of peace zones as neutral geographic areas, the community-led peace zone in Sagada can be understood as unsettling the social and spatial logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency to foreground the protection of civilian lives during armed conflict. Andrew Lohman and Colin Flint (2010: 1162) remind us that insurgency (as well as counterinsurgency) "is an inherently spatial process as it is a struggle for power to control both population and territory." By refusing armed violence in their territory, the indigenous community of Sagada underscores the ways in which peace zones disrupt the spatial processes

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of, on the one hand, "gradual constriction", a counterinsurgency approach of the AFP that seeks to deny non-state armed actors access to territory and civilian population, and on the other, the NPA's "mass base building" programs vital to insurgency expansion. For the AFP, if the military allows "so-called peace zones" to exist these areas will eventually become "sanctuaries" for the NPA (Mallari, Jr. 2007). After 9/11, the AFP incorporated the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy of "Winning the Hearts and Minds" of civilian populations in order to conclusively eliminate the communist insurgency (San Juan, Jr. 2007). With a re-engineered counterinsurgency post-9/11 that incorporates US' strategy of "Winning the Hearts and Minds" of civilian populations as a final approach to conclusively eliminate the communist insurgency (San Juan, Jr. 2007), the AFP adopted the "Clear, Hold, Consolidate and Develop" strategy that requires the military to build partnerships and community-based formations with civilian communities in areas where support to insurgency is reportedly strong (see Woon 2014). These spatial approaches within AFP's counterinsurgency strategy underscore the incompatibility of community-led peace zones as an alternative spatial process in promoting the security of civilian communities from armed violence in the midst of an active conflict between state and non-state actors.

Meanwhile, while community efforts in Sagada initially compelled the NPA to express support for the community's 1989 resolution, with a caveat that it will abide by the community regulations only if the AFP also do so (Montana 1990), the NPA largely views the notion of a peace zone as contrary to the goals of the insurgency. Activities that prevent the NPA from organizing civilian supporters into "local organs of democratic power" or "organs of political power", that function as parallel political structures or shadow state units through mass base building where "the base grows as the NPA wins the people's trust and demonstrates its benefits for them in practical ways" (Chapman 1988: 130), tend to be viewed as interrupting the

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NPA's pro-poor, nationalist, and democratic revolutionary agenda. In its critique, the NPA describes the peace zone in Sagada as "a ploy to deceive the people from the path of revolution to counterrevolution" (Montana 1990). Further, the NPA views the peace zone as a counterinsurgency tactic of hamletting that drains away a source of mass support for the rebels (Montana 1990). CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, in exile in The Netherlands, in an interview with William Holden and Kathleen Nadeau (2013: 134), also views the phenomenon of peace zones as "developed by clerico-fascists who have an agenda against the NPA", particularly referring to the peace zone projects in Mindanao implemented by NGOs connected with the Catholic church.

Despite constant delegitimization of Sagada as a peace zone by the AFP and NPA, Killip points out that community members embraced the notion of a peace zone given that the community mechanisms protecting their own lives from armed violence have been largely effective in maintaining their survival throughout almost fifty years of armed conflict:

> "If we do not have the peace zone, and armed groups are free to come and fight here, imagine what could happen? There could be more deaths. If these armed groups are not going to respect us, then we have to assert our rights. Let them declare it as a failure. What is important for us is whether it is working for the community or not. At least it gives us more space to work productively" (personal interview 2014).

As Killip underscores in the quote above, the community-led peace zone in Sagada needs to be understood beyond the dominant framework of counterinsurgency and insurgency that deny or restrict other visions and practices of ensuring the protection of civilians during prolonged armed conflict, as well as beyond the notion of neutrality.

In fact, many of my interlocutors in Sagada do not use neutrality to describe their

motivations and practices in asserting the legitimacy of the peace zone. The notion of neutrality

is problematic particularly in a context of an imbalance of power, where to be neutral tends to

contribute to more powerful structures or *status quo*. In the context of Sagada, if the peace zone

is viewed as a neutral act of the community, this view can easily slide into an affirmative

position toward the state's counterinsurgency. However, one of the ways that the peace zone in

Sagada is complex is that community leaders and members do not have a *singular* political or

ideological position on which side they support. As Killip further explains:

> "We are not biased against the military or against the NPA. We are biased for the
>
> community. What we want is for our community to define our own progress without
>
> being disturbed by armed violence. We have sons and daughters in the military, we have
>
> sons and daughters in the NPA. They are all welcome to Sagada. What we cannot
>
> tolerate is if they come here and kill each other. This is precisely why we continue to
>
> push for the concept of the peace zone. This is a community mechanism for our
>
> survival" (personal interview 2014).

What Killip illustrates in the quote above, I argue, can be better understood beyond the

notion of neutrality. In the long history of insurgency and counterinsurgency in Sagada,

community members have developed varying political relationships and ideological positions

vis-à-vis the state and CPP-NPA-NDFP. While I do not discuss here the legacies of almost fifty

years of continuous insurgency and counterinsurgency for the daily lives, institutions, and

social organization of the indigenous community of Sagada, I want to highlight the possibilities

of marginalized groups and civilian communities to come together and agree on a principle that

they do not have to experience armed violence and its consequences of physical suffering,

cruelty, displacement, trauma, or death regardless of their political commitments whether or not they support either the insurgency or counterinsurgency. As Killip points out, the peace zone is a mechanism for survival, not neutrality, to allow community members to go on with their daily lives as the conflict goes on.

Asserting one's survival is different from asserting a position of neutrality in the context of a seemingly endless war. For the NPA, civilian survival is woven into the framework and goals of the insurgency, which largely means civilians need to take up arms, form community-based militias to defend the community from military abuse, or support the communist armed revolution. For the AFP, civilian survival would mean the protection of civilians within the framework of human security and counterinsurgency, largely through direct military occupation and control of civilian communities and by forming civilian paramilitary groups that conduct counterinsurgency intelligence or participate in the AFP's counterinsurgency operations. While the AFP obliges civilian communities to abide by counterinsurgency operations, the NPA urges them to bear the sacrifices of waging an armed revolution.

But what if civilian communities and marginalized groups who have been living through almost fifty years of armed conflict desire alternative forms of security that are set on their own terms rather than by state and non-state actors? What other possibilities are there for marginalized groups who may agree with the reasons and goals of the insurgency but do not desire the consequences of armed violence to their lives, families, and community? One of the lessons that we can derive from the experience of Sagada is that it is possible for marginalized groups and civilian communities to imagine and enact alternative security practices that are not bound by frameworks and processes of insurgency and counterinsurgency or even by the notion of neutrality. However, this puts communities such as Sagada in a difficult position of

constantly negotiating a type of peace and a vision of a peaceful future that do not exist within

existing frameworks of state and non-state actors.

Insurgent peace

      In constantly asserting the legitimacy of the peace zone, community leaders and

members of Sagada protect their own lives while disrupting the social and spatial logics of

insurgency and counterinsurgency and transforming their relationship with structures of

power, as a party with equal stakes in the conflict. In her study of peace communities and

international accompaniment in Colombia as mechanisms for the protection of civilian lives in

context of an armed conflict and political violence, Sara Koopman (2011: 278) introduces the

notion of "alter-geopolitics" to refer to the ways in which "bodies of those struggling to build

peace and justice in the midst of conflict" and "privileged outsider body that is less likely to be

killed" build "alternative nonviolent securities" together through actions of solidarity.

Koopman's (2011a: 274) attention to the practices of marginalized and privileged communities

of "doing geopolitics in the streets, in homes, in jungles, and in many other spaces 'off the

page'" allows us to better understand the processes of enacting alternative security that are

obscured by dominant state-centric view and practice of geopolitics. Building upon Koopman's

notion of alter-geopolitics, I offer the concept of *insurgent peace* to better capture the ways in

which marginalized groups—on their own and in their own terms—take the initiative to

promote and cultivate their collective survival in the midst of prolonged and active conflict. I

invoke the word *insurgent* to emphasize the simultaneously disruptive and transformative

dynamics of community-led peace practices of marginalized groups that shape the ways in

which state and non-state actors conduct war and how these actors view civilian lives and

civilian agency in relation to insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Further, insurgent peace captures the daily, complex, and inventive community work of marginalized groups in building alternative peaceful futures in the midst of war by carving out new political spaces beyond the dominant view of state and non-state actors as being "above" society and "encompassing" localities (see Ferguson and Gupta 2002). In defining what peace means, Simon Dalby (2011: 1) posits that peace "is a matter of social processes, not a final Telos, a resolution of all the tensions of human life, nor a utopia that will arrive sometime". Drawing from her study of Karachi women's neighboring practices within multi-ethnic apartment buildings in Pakistan, Laura Ring (2006: 4) suggests that peace is a product of relentless daily labor, one that is "less a rationally calculated series of diplomatic and strategic choices" and more of an embodied and emotional ways of individually and collectively navigating daily life. Meanwhile, as Philippa Williams (2014: 208) reveals in her examination of Hindu-Muslim relations in Varanasi, India the efforts required in making peace "create new possibilities and give rise to new formations". Building upon these contributions to our understanding of peace as process, I study the dynamics of insurgent peace through the quotidian community work of indigenous peoples of Sagada in maintaining the legitimacy of the peace zone. I explore three salient concepts through which community leaders and members in Sagada describe their experiences that consistently emerged during my fieldwork: internal norms, interdependence, and refusal. Each of these concepts refers to the ways in which the community builds peace by mobilizing a set of internal norms, maintaining relations of interdependence with state and non-state actors, and pursuing a politics of refusal. It is not my intention to romanticize these processes—I study these processes as they appear in the practices of community members notwithstanding the constant delegitimization from the state and rebels. Rather, my aim is to better understand community-led peace practices beyond the purview of state and non-state

actors, and what these practices tell us about peace. I now turn to illustrate each of the three

concepts above.

Internal norms

The indigenous community of Sagada mobilizes a set of internal norms in asserting the

legitimacy of the peace zone amid constant delegitimization of AFP and CPP-NPA-NDFP. While

concepts of democracy and citizenship serve as legal frameworks of dominant socio-political

institutions in Sagada, the indigenous community has a parallel internal socio-cultural,

economic, and political structure called the *dap-ay*. The *dap-ay* is a governing unit within an *ili*

(community) led by the *lallakay* (male tribal elders). It is a source of customary law that governs

all aspects of life in the *ili*, specifically mandating the agricultural cycle and related rest periods

and holidays, natural resource use and management, settlement of internal and inter-tribal

disputes, performance and observation of rituals, and other cultural, economic, and political

concerns. Internal decision-making processes of the *dap-ay* require representation of all

households that are part of the jurisdiction of each *dap-ay* and encompass processes of

participatory consultation and consensus building (Cariño 1992; Cariño 1996; Prill-Brett 1987a).

As explained by Jaime Dugao, a community elder and appointed indigenous representative to

the *Sangguniang Bayan* (SB), the role of the *dap-ay* and *lallakay* in the maintenance of security for

the *ili* is rooted in their customary traditions and beliefs.:

> "The *dap-ay* protects the community against armed violence because many parts of
>
> Sagada are sacred grounds where we perform traditional and religious rituals. If armed
>
> groups commit violence in any of our sacred grounds, the *lallakay* have to perform a
>
> cleansing ritual by butchering chicken, performing sacrifices, and offering prayers. This
>
> work to cleanse the sacred ground is a huge undertaking and responsibility for the

elders and among the reasons they challenge the presence of armed groups in

Sagada" (personal interview 2016).

Scholars have noted the ways in which traditional, indigenous, and non-western concepts of

peace are rooted in the social reproduction of order, cooperation, and harmony within a

community (Taiake 2009; Faure 2000; Boege 2006) that carry spiritual dimensions animating

collective imaginaries of peaceful futures and social relations (Four Arrows 2010; Issifu 2015).

In addition to the spiritual dimensions of maintaining peace in Sagada, the indigenous

community also mobilizes a set of customary law based on oral traditions called *innayan* in the

upkeep of the peace zone. Killip describes *innayan* as:

> "something you should not do, a strong caution, and discipline. You have to be careful
>
> with what you do, what you say, and what you think because the result could be bad for
>
> you and the entire community. If someone says 'Let's arm ourselves!', the people will say
>
> *'Innayan!'*. If another says 'We're going to kill!', *Innayan!* If relatives kill each other
>
> because they belong to different organizations, that's *innayan*. If one disturbs our sacred
>
> sites, that's *innayan*. If you suspect people and torture them, that's *innayan*. Anything that
>
> can disturb the community is *innayan*" (personal interview 2014).

Innayan is a set of social practices that are collectively designated as *lawa* (prohibited or taboo) in

the *ili* on account of the community's moral and spiritual beliefs and collective welfare. More

broadly, *innayan* functions as a principle and value system that governs community members'

relationships with other people as well as animals, plants, the spirit world, and nature (Tauli-

Corpuz 2001). *Innayan* guides individual and collective practices rooted on an awareness of the

consequences of one's actions to the welfare of the community.

Community elders in Sagada often referred to *innayan* when I asked about the sources of the community's refusal of the presence of AFP and NPA in the community, tracing this practice from a long history of resolving inter-tribal conflicts popularly called "tribal wars" in the Cordillera region (for an overview, see Prill-Brett 1987b). Killip illustrates how the concept of *innayan* is practiced in relation to the armed conflict between GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP, specifically at times when the community negotiates with AFP and NPA against armed violence in Sagada.:

> "One time in the 1980s, the NPA ambushed a passenger jeepney on a road here in Sagada. A police official from Bontoc (a bordering tribe and community) was riding the jeepney along with other civilian passengers. The NPA asked the police officer to step out of the jeepney, but the officer refused. The NPA opened fire. There were civilians in the jeepney so the elders had to perform rituals to cleanse the site. There are many *innayan* in that situation. First, the fact that the police officer was riding a public passenger jeepney and putting others in danger, that's *innayan*. Second, when NPAs hold an ambush in our territory, elders are responsible to hold the rituals to cleanse and that's not easy to do. We need to get animals to sacrifice and say prayers. These rituals take so much of our time. Further, the incident also led to bad feelings from the people of Bontoc toward the people of Sagada. We were traditional enemies in the past and this incident resurrected old conflicts between our communities. And so, it's *innayan*" (personal interview 2014).

The quote above illustrates the ways in which the indigenous community of Sagada foregrounds internal norms to refuse armed violence within their community, bolstering claims of legitimacy of the peace zone.

Community-led practices that protect civilian lives through internal norms such as *innayan* highlight the significant role of non-western norms and practices in conjuring and enacting alternative peace practices outside formal peace processes between state and non-state actors as well as peace initiatives of NGOs and CSOs. While scholars are careful not to over-emphasize the traditional or indigenous dimensions of peace practices in communities such as Sagada, to avoid romanticizing the "traditional" (Mac Ginty 2008: 151), or in other instances, viewing traditional or indigenous peace approaches as applicable in each and every case as a "panacea for the curse of violence in the global South and for overcoming war and securing peace once and for all" (Boege 2006: 435), I highlight the internal norms of the *dap-ay* and *innayan* as they constantly appear in my interviews and conversations with community members in Sagada but also because these internal norms merit attention yet are not addressed in existing studies of peace zones and peacebuilding, insurgency, and counterinsurgency in the Philippines. While examining the practices of the *dap-ay* and *innayan* may not be applicable in understanding other community-led peace zones or practices, I posit that attending to a set of internal norms, values, social organization or infrastructures, that are intimately connected to a marginalized group's collective history and identity, relations to land, and other dimensions of collective life, can help reveal alternative peace practices that protect civilian lives beyond the purview of the state and rebels.

Interdependence

A second salient concept that emerged in my fieldwork is the notion of interdependence, seen through constant dialogues initiated by community leaders and members of Sagada with the AFP and NPA. These negotiations signal the ways in which the community of Sagada takes initiative in managing their relationships with both the state and

rebels, not to promote independence, isolation, or separation from the state as most indigenous autonomous movements are typically represented in scholarly literature (Erazo 2013), but rather as processes of interdependence. Sagada is different from what James Scott (2009; 1998) refers to as "nonstate spaces", highland areas that are outside the reach of and non-legible to the state or even non-state actors. Both the Philippine state and CPP-NPA-NDFP are present in Sagada, the political, economic, ideological, and cultural legacies of each actor woven into many aspects of the daily life of the community, as Killip alludes to above. What may be peculiar to Sagada is the community's collective ability to stand their ground and negotiate with both AFP and NPA as an actor with parallel sovereignty to state and non-state actors. This is not to say, however, that the upkeep of the peace zone in Sagada is easy. The idea of an indigenous community —"Filipino citizens" in the AFP's view and "the masses" in the NPA's—imposing alternative visions of security and peace upon the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP that lie outside the formal peace process or frameworks of insurgency and counterinsurgency is largely unacceptable to either party, making it challenging for the community of Sagada. Community elder Dugao points out the difficulty of negotiating with both state and non-state actors:

"It was a struggle for the leaders in Sagada to lobby with the military and NPA. It was difficult for the Philippine government represented by the military to accept the peace zone. They say it was a communist initiative. Even the NDFP, they do not like the peace zone. They say it's a CIA initiative. But we have to keep asserting. Our leaders composed of multi-sectoral groups, the church, the community officials assert that it (peace zone) is not an ideological thing. It is the people's sentiment because of what was happening. If any member of the military would want to come to Sagada, they are all welcome provided they are unarmed. The same goes with the NPA… The AFP and NPA

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will never respect the peace zone. It is the people here in Sagada who have to continuously assert its importance. What is necessary is for us to continuously meet with the military and tell them 'Please don't conduct your operations here.' To the rebels, we will tell them the same thing. There are many issues that the government and the Left (i.e., CPP-NPA-NDFP) are fighting about. It is not our purpose to stop the war. It's a national phenomenon, and we know that. Who are we to stop it? But for them to come here and kill each other, and innocent civilians get killed in the course of the conflict, that's what we cannot accept" (personal interview 2016).

This quote illustrates the important dynamics of interdependence and insurgent peace that I am developing here. First, while the community acknowledges that their lives are entangled in a conflict they do not have full control of, they understand that they can take initiatives in managing their relationship with both actors in order to protect their lives from armed violence. Second, I want to emphasize the role of constant negotiations in making this happen. In Sagada, community leaders and members actively face and negotiate with the AFP and NPA on each case of armed violence, encampments, or operations conducted within the municipality. In almost all instances, the negotiations are led with the participation of the *lallakay* or other community leaders who have a deep understanding of the history of the community's experiences throughout decades of insurgency and counterinsurgency. While the ways of negotiating with the AFP and NPA vary based on situations and actors—community members negotiate with the NPA through mechanisms built by the community through a long history of interactions with the rebels, mainly through dialogues, criticisms, and written petitions sent to NPA members while negotiations between the community and military tend to abide by processes built into the military hierarchy and bureaucracy— these negotiations underscore the

capacity of the indigenous community of Sagada to act with parallel authority vis-à-vis state and non-state actors and promote interdependence.

Paying attention to interdependence as a necessary process of insurgent peace opens up possibilities of understanding community-led peace practices away from the dominant analysis of the AFP and NPA as practices that facilitate either insurgency or counterinsurgency. Rather, seeing the constant work of the indigenous community of Sagada as enacting interdependence allows us to acknowledge the ways in which they create an alternative geography rooted upon their sovereignty as an indigenous community. For the indigenous peoples of Sagada, the peace zone allows for community practices that substantiate and realize their claims of sovereignty as a community taking control of their collective lives and future.

In her study of a contemporary phenomenon of casino gaming owned and operated by the Seminole tribe within Native American territories, Jessica Cattelino (2008) argues that indigenous sovereignty can be understood beyond the binary of either full autonomy or subjugation. Rather, Cattelino (2008: 188) looks into the ways in which sovereignty is shaped by "multiple and shifting relations of interdependency." As Cattelino posits, casino gaming requires the Seminole tribe to maintain relations of interdependence with nearby tribes, non-Seminole residents, and state and federal governments. Further, Cattelino argues that the economic gains from the casino gaming industry of the Seminole people allow for the strengthening of indigenous autonomy through the promotion and support of Seminole cultural legacies and projects. As Cattelino suggests, the ability of the Seminole people to maintain relations of interdependence is a manifestation of political sovereignty.

In the experiences of indigenous peoples of Sagada, the constant negotiations with the AFP and NPA in asserting the legitimacy of the peace zone and protecting lives throughout the

prolonged conflict can be better understood as processes through which the indigenous community forges interdependency as a key function and demonstration of their sovereignty. Seeing these community-led negotiations as processes of interdependence between a civilian community and state and non-state actors also allow us to understand the ways in which the indigenous community of Sagada is re-imagining geopolitics away from the dominant geopolitical imaginations of the state and non-state actors, and how this geopolitical re-imagination emerging from the community further shapes geopolitical processes of insurgency and counterinsurgency as well as of war and peace.

Refusal

In June 2014, community officials from one *baranggay* in Sagada wrote a resolution to oppose an encampment of police officers from the provincial police force of Mountain Province who spent the night near some of the community residents' houses. A *baranggay* captain recalled the incident:

> "Some residents were alarmed that armed police officers slept near their houses at night. We were not even informed by the police of their activities in Sagada. The police eventually left the area the next day, but then they moved to a nearby *baranggay.* Community officials of that *baranggay* wrote a resolution against the police encampment . The police officers left, but then they came back to our *baranggay*. I spoke with one of the police officers to let them know that residents do not feel comfortable with the presence of armed police officers near their houses. The residents fear for their safety and they do not want the police to set up camp here. If the NPA camps here, the community will also say 'no'" (personal interview 2014).

During informal conversations and interviews, it is important for my interlocutors in the community to communicate that they also apply the same community regulations against armed violence to the NPA. I returned to the field in 2016, a year after NPA members staged an ambush within a *baranggay* in the *poblacion*. The target of the attack was a police officer suspected to be working as an intelligence agent (Udyaw 2015). After this incident, community leaders met with the NPA to demand an end to any form of armed violence within Sagada:

"The message that we gave the NPA: 'We understand that you are fighting the government and you do not respect government laws. However, there exists parallel traditional governance within our communities. You should have placed the case (of the suspected intelligence agent from Sagada) within our processes before even thinking of going through any drastic action.' They were not prepared to answer! They accepted that they overlooked this. If somebody has done something wrong, usually we ask the elders if they can act on the case. The elders will call for a community meeting and summon the person. Sometimes the village elders would say 'you better live somewhere else before anything happens to you.' At least, the elders are the ones to give the sanction! Rather than killing the person for whatever reason, the elders can tell the person to leave instead because he is affecting the peace in the community. So we told the NPA, 'what you did was wrong. You did not go through the community process.' Finally, we said, 'No more summary executions here.' They agreed" (personal interview 2016).

Refusal, as a process through which the community of Sagada maintains the peace zone, illuminates our understanding of the ways in which spaces of peace are carved out within an ongoing war to allow civilian communities not only to protect their lives during armed conflict,

but also to re-configure their political relationships with competing state and non-state armed actors and enact peaceful futures in the everyday.

Sarah Wright's (2008: 224) depictions of the persistent efforts of small farmers in the Southern Tagalog region in the Philippines, that reveal how marginalized communities "imagine and bring into being new futures" premised not on the absence of fear or reaction to fear but underpinned by a sense of hope, allow us to better understand refusal as both transgressive and transformative. Further, the community's constant refusal of armed violence signals their collective ability to assume a parallel position of power with state and non-state armed groups and determine community life in their own terms. As Killip argues:

> "If anyone would claim that the peace zone is not a total success, it's not a total failure either. The peace zone has prevented further civilian deaths in Sagada. It has allowed us a space to engage in our livelihood. If the NPA or AFP disagrees with the peace zone, that's understandable because it gets in the way of their agenda. But we also observed that the peace zone is getting a level of respect from the armed groups. To an extent, they acknowledge the terms of the peace zone. They have to, otherwise how can they 'win the hearts and minds' if they insist of going against the will and sentiment of the community? We have to show them that we will not respect anyone who insists on coming here just because they hold guns (personal interview 2014)."

Refusal can be better understood beyond wartime agency, a framework dominant in studies of peace zones and anthropological studies of armed conflict. In his examination of how civilians dealt with conflicts in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, specifically focusing on "wartime mobility" in relation to the phenomenon of war-related displacement, Stephen Lubkemann (2008) complicates our understanding of wartime social existence by moving

beyond the framework of viewing daily life during war as agentive processes of navigating or coping with violence. One of the key arguments that Lubkemann (2008) makes is particularly illuminating for our understanding of the experiences of the indigenous community of Sagada. He argues that wartime social condition is about armed violence and civilian efforts that mitigate violence, as well as negotiations over legitimacy and transformation of social relations. In Sagada, the constant refusal of armed violence, often invoked simultaneously with the legitimacy of *innayan*, underscores not only community initiatives of protecting their own security but also the geopolitical work of the indigenous community in re-imagining the social and spatial configurations between state, rebels, and marginalized groups. To refuse dominant power requires an acknowledgement of one's political position to be able to refuse in the first place. In her study of the ways in which the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke in what is currently southwestern Quebec, Audra Simpson (2014: 10) argues that refusal "comes with the requirement of having one's *political* sovereignty acknowledged and upheld", illuminating our understanding that "sovereignty may exist within sovereignty." The peace zone in Sagada underscores the importance of acknowledging civilian communities as sovereign actors, existing within and in parallel to the sovereignty of two competing actors, the Philippine government and CPP-NPA-NDFP.

Conclusions

In this article I propose the term *insurgent peace* to better capture a type of peacemaking rooted on quotidian community work, beyond the purview of state and non-state actors or NGOs; daily work that disrupts and re-configures the social and spatial logics of war while transforming the political relationship of marginalized communities with structures of power as an equally sovereign actor during war. Through a study of the experiences of the indigenous

community of Sagada in maintaining a community-led peace zone amid fifty years of active war between the Philippine state and CPP-NPA-NDFP, I reveal the complex community work often neglected in dominant scales of geopolitical analysis of war and peace that tend to focus on state-centric and expert or NGO-driven peacebuilding projects. I emphasize the significance of internal norms, interdependence and refusal as necessary dynamics of insurgent peacemaking and through which the indigenous community of Sagada re-imagines peace as both an interruption to the practices of state and rebels and re-configuration of the community's relationship to dominant power.

Further, I examine community-led peace zones beyond the popular depiction as demilitarized, neutral or peaceful communities. These zones also are neither isolated nor liberated from the dominant power structures of state and non-state armed actors or other external political actors. Rather, I re-cast community-led peace zones as spaces of contention and future-making that transgress the spatial logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency and transform the ways in which civilian communities negotiate with state and non-state actors as a party with equal stakes in the war.

While these dynamics allow the indigenous community of Sagada to enact peace in their own terms, the community's peace practices are not romantic but also not impossible. As I illustrate throughout the article, community-led efforts of maintaining the peace zone are constantly undermined and delegitimized by both state and non-state actors, requiring community leaders and members of Sagada to persistently assert the legitimacy of the type of peace and geopolitical order they imagine and enact in the face of an endless war. These efforts are rooted upon established yet dynamic practices of *innayan* that are informed by a rich archive of experiences of collectively standing up as a sovereign people.

The critical question of the extent of the impact of community-led peace practices in re-shaping the dynamics of armed conflicts needs to be taken on for future research, alongside investigations around the durability and local ownership of these zones. Scholars argue that the durability of a peace zone rests upon its capacity to connect local and national peace efforts (Garcia 2007). However, as I have documented in this article, community efforts in Sagada in maintaining the legitimacy of the peace zone are excluded from the peace process brokered between the Philippine state and CPP-NPA-NDFP. Not only has neither party brought the topic of community-led peace zones into their respective peace agenda, but also they both have continuously denied the legitimacy of these zones. What is interesting, however, is that the peace zone in Sagada has remained *far more durable and long-term* than the consistently unpredictable and intermittent state-centric peace negotiations. The intent here is not to disparage these state-led peace processes—the history of the Philippine peace process between the GRP and CPP-NPA-NDFP has yielded remarkable norms and protocols protecting human rights in an armed conflict that are applicable globally—but to shed a light to other peace practices imagined and led by civilian communities beyond the purview of state and non-state actors or NGOs. Rather than asking how community-led peace zones can connect their efforts with national peace processes, questions can be pointed toward the state: how can the government and its military better comply with the peace zone regulations set by civilian communities? Toward non-state actors: what would it take for insurgent organizations to recognize community initiatives that seek to protect civilian lives during armed violence beyond labeling these efforts as counter-revolutionary or reactionary?

The issue of "local ownership" is another critical issue to examine for future studies of community-led peace practices. Scholars argue that the key to success in peacebuilding emerges

once local actors determine for themselves the kind of peacebuilding activities required and how these are enacted (Thiessen 2013). However, in the case of Sagada, the notion of community ownership, while critical to understanding the peace practices and specific historical and cultural sources of these practices within Sagada, often has been mobilized by the Philippine state and CPP-NPA-NDFP to undermine and invalidate the legitimacy of those practices they deem as contradicting their respective agendas. Further, our understanding of indigenous peace practices, an emerging theme at the UN (UN 2016; UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2016), can benefit from future empirical studies of the range of indigenous practices that facilitate community-led mechanisms for the protection of indigenous lives, specifically in situations wherein indigenous community are at odds with state and non-state armed actors, often linked with transnational companies that exploit natural resources in indigenous territories, and in far too dangerous conditions where there may not even exist a 'grassroots' that can facilitate community-led peace practices. Finally, more scholarly engagement on the concept of peace is needed. I re-examine community-led peace zones and the kind of work required from communities in making spaces for peace during an active war to re-think peace beyond its dominant definition as an absence of violence or an endpoint in a *telos* of war. I argue that there is a need for a renewed understanding of peace and peacebuilding that is crucial and relevant to the emergent geopolitical conditions of our time and to our common desire for a peaceful world.

CHAPTER 3

SUSPICION AND ETHNOGRAPHIC PEACE RESEARCH

(NOTES FROM A LOCAL RESEARCHER)

Introduction

'Do not to talk to that person in the camouflage short pants,' my local

research assistant in the field tells me as we pass by the municipal police station. Not

knowing how to respond to this unexpected implicit warning, I do not say anything

and maintain my pace. As I continue to walk, I turn my eye slightly to the left to try

to get a glimpse of the person being referred to. I see a figure wearing a plain, white,

round-neck T-shirt and camouflage short pants. I have been in this municipality of

mostly indigenous peoples in the northern part of the Philippines for a month now.

In the late 1980s, community leaders and members declared a ban on the entry of the

Philippine military and the Maoist insurgent group, the New People's Army (NPA). I

have been conducting interviews about the ways the community legitimizes and

enforces the ban, protecting civilian lives from the impact of almost five decades of

on-going armed conflict.

It is now approaching 5 pm on a weekday in August 2014. The rain has

stopped after a downpour throughout the day, and the main road that leads to the

poblacion, the municipal town center, is busy with the arrival of two public jeepneys,

stopping in front of the Municipal Hall. Fifteen to twenty passengers, older men and

women and young adults, slowly disembark from each jeepney, each carrying a

shopping bag or a daypack, returning after a daytrip from a neighboring

municipality. Across the Municipal Hall, in front of a newly constructed shopping

mall, children as young as seven years old wearing their school uniforms, carrying backpacks and holding umbrellas walk on the road in pairs or groups after being dismissed from the nearby elementary school. A couple of government employees are coming out of the Municipal Hall, crossing the road to stop by the public market to buy some produce before walking home. A number of community residents, mostly men, are passing time outside the shopping mall – sitting, standing, squatting, chewing *moma* (betel nut), talking to each other – observing the 'scene' at the jeepney terminal, Municipal Hall, public market, and police station.

The police station is a one-story structure, sandwiched between the public market to the right and a two-story shopping complex to the left. The location of the police station – in between two structures frequented daily by local traders, farmers, store owners, shoppers, children – is strategic. Since the 1980s, municipal police stations in the interior rural parts of many provinces in the Philippines have often been targets of sniping and raids by members of the NPA, a rebel armed group waging the world's longest communist insurgency, led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Armed attacks by the rebels are meant to harass state security agents, secure firearms and ammunitions, or punish 'counter-revolutionary' police officers. In establishing a police station right between two public spaces frequented by civilians, the municipal police force looks after its security by making it difficult for rebels to attack the station by mobilizing a net of civilian informants in the area that could track rebel movements and alert the police officers ahead of time. Likewise, rebels find it challenging to conduct armed activities near the presence of

civilians fearing casualties will result in anger and isolation from the communities that they rely on for support.

I am now thirty feet away from the police station, moving from north to south, walking towards the public market. I approach a spot where I am directly parallel to where the person wearing camouflage short pants is standing. 'That person is suspected as an intelligence agent,' my research assistant continues with the warning. I do not respond nor do I turn my head to look at the person's face. I do not want to in case we lock eyes with each other. I move as indifferently as possible, not wanting to attract attention. I am aware that most of the people hanging out in the *poblacion* know that I am not from here, a place where everyone is related to everybody. My casual urban clothes signal that I am possibly from Manila, one of the many tourists from the lowlands who come here for a couple of days to experience the cool mountain climate and get a glimpse of the indigenous ways of life. My research assist- ant quietly walks with me. I find a series of questions spinning through my head: Would it be better if I turn to recognize the person's face? How important is this moment in my ethnography? Should I worry about my security? Does my research assistant feel some form of validation or anxiety for sharing a 'village secret' with me? What if the person knows what my research assistant alleges? And what if the person knows that I know the allegation? What if the person knows that I have been asking questions to community residents about the armed conflict and the ways in which the community responds to the violence? What if, in turn, I become the object of suspicion? What are the stakes? From where I am, it will

take one minute to enter and exit the person's line of sight. I maintain my pace and kept walking.

I highlight this moment in my fieldwork as a doctoral student from the Philippines to focus upon the notion of suspicion as a lens to understand the distinct challenges that local researchers from the Global South encounter in ethnographic fieldwork when studying peace and peacebuilding in the context of active armed conflict within their home countries. Over the last decade, scholars have increasingly deployed ethnographic approaches to better understand peacebuilding, devoting careful attention to local actors and processes that shape the practices and outcomes of international peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict environments in the Global South (see, for instance, Millar 2014; Moore 2013; Autusserre 2014b). While this local turn (Autusserre 2014a; Mac Ginty 2011; 2008; Richmond and Mitchell 2011) in Peace Research (PR) triggered a renewed awareness of the challenges to ethnographic fieldwork in situations of war, armed conflict and political violence, most of the conversations in the emergent Ethnographic Peace Research (EPR) literature focus upon and draw from the experiences of researchers from the Global North conducting ethnographic research in the Global South. Begging to be considered in the EPR literature are the experiences of local researchers from the Global South who are immersed in ethnographic research in their home countries, and what these experiences tell us about the differential politics in ethnographic research.

Scholars have acknowledged the ways in which researchers often become an object of suspicion. Jeffrey Sluka (2012) argued that suspicion is among the main sources of danger in ethnographic fieldwork, noting that almost every anthropologist has encountered being suspected as spies. In the context of an active armed conflict, researchers often face being

suspected by competing armed actors. Nancy Howell (1990) posited that researchers who study insurgency and counterinsurgency were often suspected by military officials of supporting the rebels and by the rebels of spying for the government or competing for public support. While suspicion as a social process is common to ethnographic fieldwork, and particularly so in the context of armed conflict, I argue that the ways in which one becomes an object of suspicion and the con- sequences of suspicion vary between local researchers from the Global South and researchers from the Global North. Local researchers are easily perceived as politically biased or lacking neutrality by state and non-state armed actors because of their personal or professional relationships and political involvement. If suspected as spies, the consequences can be severe and long- term, even beyond the tenure of their fieldwork. By virtue of citizenship, local researchers from the Global South are subject to national and local laws, security policies and state surveillance in their countries. They can be subjected to vilification, intimidation and physical harm. Their current or future professional careers can be jeopardized if they intend to live and work in their countries.

Further, drawing from my experiences as a doctoral student from the Philippines who is trained in the US, I also argue that local researchers who are trained in the Global North and who conduct ethnographic research in their countries in the Global South experience 'double suspicion'. Double suspicion refers to processes through which local researchers encounter suspicion simultaneously from the local communities they work with, who tend to be suspicious of Western perspectives about the Global South, on the one hand, and from scholars in the Global North who perceive a lack of scholarly distance for local researchers who conduct research in their home countries.

This article provides a reflective account of fieldwork experiences from one local researcher from the Global South. Such accounts are much needed, the paper argues, to better capture the wide range of challenges faced by EPR in studying peace and peacebuilding. With most armed conflicts occurring in the Global South (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015), local researchers are often better positioned to ethnographically investigate the processes through which sustainable and culturally relevant peace can emerge within their countries in relation to broader global political realities. They are often well equipped to immerse themselves in long-term ethnographic research and examine local actors and processes with the breadth and depth of their understanding of local norms, customs and histories, their high-level language capabilities, and extensive personal and professional connections necessary to succeed in the field. However, local researchers also face many challenges, including suspicion and the consequences of suspicion, which are not addressed in existing EPR literature. Additionally, many of the recommendations for how to navigate the risks and dangers of ethnographic fieldwork draw from the experiences of researchers from the Global North, and do not necessarily apply to local researchers from the Global South.

In the first part of the article, I examine key differences in the experiences and consequences of suspicion between local researchers and their foreign counterparts from the Global North. In the second part, I explore the notion of double suspicion that local researchers who are trained in universities in the Global North navigate, touching upon issues of engaged scholarship, ethnographic reflexivity and whiteness. To examine the processes of both suspicion and double suspicion, I include vignettes from my dissertation fieldwork experience as a doctoral student in the US from the Philippines. My research examines the work required from civilian communities in making peace beyond the purview of the state through an investigation

of the phenomenon of self-organized and community-led peace zones (popularly understood as demilitarized geographic areas) in the Philippines, against a backdrop of nearly five decades of armed conflict between the state and a Maoist rebel organization. These vignettes reflect upon my experiences as a local researcher engaged in EPR, focusing upon suspicion and double suspicion as challenges I encounter in and beyond the field site. I conclude this article by offering a summary of my arguments and sharing insights on key topics for related future studies that can assist local researchers from the Global South in preparing and planning to engage in EPR in their countries.

Suspicion

I never had an interview or engagement with the person that my research assistant was referring to. While I took note of the warning from my research assistant in my head notes and field journal, I did not end up pursuing the story. At that particular moment, it was my intention to hold off from probing the circumstances of the person in question as well as the reasons behind my research assistant's warning. My inaction could be viewed as a missed opportunity to pursue potentially valuable information. It could also be perceived as a lapse in judgment in terms of my own security in the field: for the more we know the better we can assess the full risk, plan ahead, and pre-empt any possible harm to ourselves and our interlocutors. I thought about these concerns while in the field, but held back from asking questions to my research assistant or looking for information that could shed light on the identity and activities of the person in question. I did not pursue this line of inquiry due to concern that it would circulate in the community. The risks for a local researcher asking about a community member who is suspected of being an intelligence agent could easily slide into a scenario where I

might become an object of suspicion: Why is he interested to know more about this individual? For what purpose does he want to know? Who does he work for? I returned to the field in the summer of 2016. After catching up with some of my interlocutors, I was able to verify news about an incident a year before when members of the NPA ambushed a resident within the municipality during a town fiesta. The target of the ambush survived multiple gunshot wounds and has since left the municipality. During an interview with a community leader about the incident, I found out that the person who was ambushed is the same person my research assistant warned me about.

From insurgency and counterinsurgency to the 'global war on terror', suspicion has different iterations and becomes a part of daily life among civilian communities entangled in armed conflict. State security forces and non- state armed groups are intensely concerned with determining whether or not civilians support the 'enemy'. Meanwhile, civilians are often suspicious of each other for sympathizing, aiding or working on behalf of either of the armed groups to the detriment of the community. Civilians who have been suspected often face political vilification, discrimination, isolation, arrest, harassment, physical harm and elimination through extrajudicial assassination. Julianna Ochs (2011) defines objects of suspicion as those 'forbidden to approach'. In Northern Ireland, many individuals were placed under arrest on the basis of being suspected as an IRA member, with suspicion giving rise to derogatory and discriminatory laws and military control of the population (Bigo and Guittet 2011). Over 3,000 people were arrested in Nepal on the basis of suspicion regarding their membership of or sympathy for the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) after the state declared a state of emergency in 2002 (Pettigrew 2003). Judith Pettigrew also witnessed civilians, who were suspected to be

rebel sympathizers, hit with rifles by members of the Nepali military (Pettigrew, et.al. 2004). In

the Philippines, many indigenous peoples who were suspected of being Maoist sympathizers

were disappeared or killed by armed groups operating clandestinely (Stavenhagen 2003).

Through these processes, suspicion works to control the civilian population on a daily basis by

generating a constant sense of fear and anxiety.

In insurgency and counterinsurgency, the precarity of daily life and competing political

and military agendas of state and non-state armed actors generate uncertainty and ambivalence

among civilian communities entangled in armed conflicts. Pettigrew's ethnography of the

violent conflict between Maoist insurgents of the CPN and the Royal Nepalese Army captures

this well:

> While the security forces were in the village, people feared that the army would
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> learn about their interactions with the Maoists. When the army left, villagers worried
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> that the Maoists would interpret their interactions with the army as treacherous
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> (Pettigrew, et.al. 2004: 23).

Pettigrew (2003) also observes that suspicion replaced the openness of community life when

residents were accused of taking sides. Armed groups were also suspicious of community

assemblies for grassroots development in rural areas, accusing community residents of

supporting the other side (Rechlin, et.al. 2007). In Northern Ireland, Paddy Hillyard (1993) notes

that the Catholic Irish became a 'suspect community' for the British, who viewed every Irish

person as a potential IRA supporter at the height of British counterinsurgency. In the

Philippines, state security forces label indigenous people's communities as 'hotbeds of

terrorism', and identify many indigenous peoples' leaders as suspected communist

sympathizers (Chua 2006).

Several anthropologists have discussed the ways in which researchers encounter suspicion in the field. Nancy Howell (1990) observes that in an insurgency and counterinsurgency, the military may suspect anthropologists of supporting the rebels while the rebels may suspect anthropologists of working for the government. John Borneman (2009) also suggests that the presence of researchers often provokes suspicion among interlocutors out of fear that the former will use the information to betray the latter. Jeffrey Sluka (1995) avers that every anthropologist who has done fieldwork has been suspected as a spy for a number of reasons, many of which are contextual. In the early decades of the discipline of anthropology, in the nineteenth century, the suspicion of anthropologists over possibilities of their collaboration with authority reflected the power relations during the colonial period (Sluka 1995). During the first world war, Franz Boas (1973) revealed that at least four anthropologists worked as spies for the US government. Throughout the cold war, anthropologists conducting fieldwork abroad were suspected as spies amidst the deployment of intelligence agents by the US government in many countries around the world. Suspicion of anthropologists continues particularly in the context of the 'global war on terror' post-9/11 (Borneman 2009).

While scholars reveal a wide range of sources of suspicion in ethnographic fieldwork, I argue that local researchers from the Global South who conduct research in their countries experience the consequences of suspicion differently than their foreign counterparts from the Global North. Local researchers who study war and peace in their countries of origin often draw from the reflections of their foreign counterparts when preparing for potential challenges, risks and dangers of ethnographic fieldwork. However, local researchers do not carry many of the privileges of their foreign colleagues when navigating difficult situations in the field. Further, many of the recommendations that foreign researchers propose in navigating physical,

emotional, ethical and professional challenges in the field emerge from experiences, reflections and recommendations of mostly foreign researchers, and often are inadequate or not applicable to the experiences of local researchers as citizens of the countries they study. Writing about the experiences of local researchers is a difficult task. I am aware of the risks of essentializing local or foreign researchers, or deploying simplistic binaries, in comparing the experiences of local researchers from the Global South and foreign researchers from the Global North. This is not my intent. Rather, my aim is to better understand the challenges of EPR that local researchers face in their countries.

I suggest two key differences in the consequences of suspicion for local researchers immersed in ethnographic fieldwork in their countries in the Global South relative to their foreign counterparts from the Global North. First, local researchers oftentimes are deemed by armed actors as expendable lives. They also often become objects of suspicion because of their family and personal relationships, previous professional background or political involvement and so can more easily be perceived as politically biased or lacking neutrality by local armed groups than foreign, and particularly white, researchers. The consequences of being suspected as a spy can be severe for local researchers. By virtue of their citizenship, they are subject to national and local laws, security policies and state surveillance, which can result in vilification, harassment, intimidation, disappearance or death. One example of this is Myrna Mack, a UK-trained Maya-Chinese Guatemalan anthropologist, who was stabbed to death by a low-ranking security official in 1990. Mack studied the social upheaval, displacement and human rights violations experienced by the indigenous Maya during the insurgency and counterinsurgency in Guatemala. Over 100 university professors and researchers have been murdered in Guatemala since the 1980s, with many more going into exile over this time (Oglesby 1995).

In the Philippines, where political authorities and armed actors are regarded by human rights organizations as having impunity from punishment for the extrajudicial killings and disappearances of both perceived dissidents and members of the local political opposition, media, NGOs and academics,[13] local researchers who are involved in political movements often receive direct threats of harm and are harassed through overt forms of surveillance that are meant to intimidate (Tolentino and Raymundo 2006). For instance, while conducting research about the militarization of indigenous peoples communities in Mindanao, Filipino anthropologists and university professors Myfel Paluga and Andrea Malaya Ragragio observed pairs of men on motorcycles following them (Saligumba 2014), a mode of surveillance that commonly preceded the disappearance and extrajudicial killings of many academics and activists.

Yet the circumstances are often different for foreign researchers from the Global North. For instance, in Nepal when Maoist insurgents were making anti-foreign statements and forcing foreign development workers to leave the areas with strong rebel influence, anthropologist Sara Shneiderman received a hand delivered message from Maoist insurgents to notify her that she was under surveillance and ordered her to leave the local community where she was conducting research (Pettigrew, et.al. 2004). One source of the different consequences of suspicion for local and foreign researchers is that state or non-state armed actors are more calculating when they approach the latter, noting the repercussions that could emerge from a controversy over placing a foreign researcher in danger, including changes in the conflict environment or impact to an ongoing peace process.

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[13] See, for instance, Human Rights Watch, 2001, Philippines: New Killings as Impunity Reigns; Amnesty International, 2014, Philippines: Above the Law; Alston, 2008, Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights.

A second key difference in the consequences of suspicion to local and foreign researchers involves mobility. Scholars have suggested some of the ways to mitigate security concerns and dangers in high-risk ethnographic fieldwork include occasionally leaving the field site (Millar 2014; Autusserre 2014b), conducting multi- site ethnography, and shorter periods of data collection to avoid attracting suspicion from armed actors (Pettigrew, et.al. 2004). Other scholars also recommend to 'flee' the field site when necessary (Pettigrew, et.al. 2004). However, moving and traveling amidst a high-risk conflict is not easy for local researchers. Leaving the conflict area poses difficult challenges including crossing checkpoints, being trailed by informants or security forces, or being forcibly disappeared. If they are able to flee the field site, leaving the country may not be as easy as it is likely to be for their foreign counterparts. Researchers from the Global North have a relative ease of movement and travel in many developing countries, a privilege and 'double standard' that Mack observed as their 'risk-free access even to the remotest regions' (cited in Oglesby 1995). Without discounting the circumstances wherein foreign researchers experience security risks in the field as a result of being foreign or white in a developing country–Sally Moore (2009:154) notes the difficulty in making oneself as inconspicuous as possible when 'there is no way that a white person can be inconspicuous in an African country'–researchers from the Global North can rely on relatively less impinged mobility in the Global South.

Such ease of movement is useful when the time comes for foreign researchers to flee the field site and the country they are in. Many researchers from the Global North have noted the wonders that American, Canadian or European passports can do to protect their lives in the most challenging situations, but being white also renders another advantage for getting through borders. This is highlighted in the experience of Nasser Abufarha (2009), a Palestinian-American

anthropologist who conducted research on 'suicide bombers' in his hometown in Palestine. While Abufarha (2009: 16) successfully navigated a border checkpoint manned by Israeli security forces by showing his US passport, he observed that he was also able to do so by crossing the border with another colleague who is white, 'one who is not an Arab like him'. Additionally, for many foreign researchers from the Global North who may have encountered suspicion in the field, re-locating back to their home countries and being physically away from the field site offer a level of protection from the consequences of suspicion as well as safety in publishing ethnographic information that could be considered sensitive. Local researchers face a different scenario. Mack once commented, as recalled by Elizabeth Oglesby, that "the difference between a US scholar and a Guatemalan scholar is that in the United States, you say 'publish or perish.' Here, we say, 'if we publish, we perish'" (Oglesby 1995: 255).

Double suspicion

Another key way in which the experiences and consequences of suspicion are distinct for local researchers from the Global South is 'double suspicion'. Double suspicion refers to the ways in which local researchers become simultaneously suspected by their local interlocutors and by the international community of scholars. The first aspect of double suspicion, of being suspected by local interlocutors, underscores the ways in which Western-educated local researchers face suspicion from local communities who are ambivalent towards the role of Western education.[14] The second aspect of double suspicion refers to the ways in which Western scholars tend to suspect the intellectual contributions of local researchers. In conducting research, local researchers from the Global South are expected to demonstrate scholarly distance and to defamiliarize their knowledge of their own countries or communities. Emerging from

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[14] See, for instance, Kaomea, 2001, Dilemmas of an Indigenous Academic; Smith, 1999, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Spivak, 1988, Can the Subaltern Speak?

literary theory as a device that compels readers to 'examine their automated perceptions of that which is so familiar that it seems natural and so unquestionable' (Bell, et.al. 2005: 151), social researchers have mobilized the concept of defamiliarization in fostering a capacity for experiencing a moment of 'eureka' or surprise during fieldwork, with the 'element of surprise' acknowledged as a necessary and important instigator of thought that opens up whole new horizons (Guyer 2013). The framework of defamiliarization in ethnography and social research is underpinned by the notion of 'cultural blindness' (Alvesson 1989), that if ethnographers are very familiar with the culture being studied, there is a tendency to be less attentive to the banal and taken-for-granted features of the culture itself (Prasad 2005).

Other scholars argue that defamiliarization is more difficult than gaining access in the field (Ybema and Kamsteg, 2009). In my experience as a Filipino doctoral student in the US, I needed to learn quickly and exhaustively the ways in which Western scholars conceptualize and study the Philippines and their intellectual and methodological tools, in order for me to engage the existing scholarship in the US about my home country. I also needed to learn the dominant Western paradigms that frame these scholarships, paradigms that often do not have any equivalent or basis at home.[15] Further, scholars prescribe a variety of 'estrangement strategies' to help ethnographers develop a detached and 'objective' perspective when interpreting research data including physically leaving the field site and breaking intimate ties with local interlocutors (de Jong et.al. 2013: 178). These estrangement tools often counter the expectations of local communities that the relationships between local researchers and interlocutors will be enduring (Kaomea 2001).

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[15] See, for instance, Heryanto, 2007, "Can There Be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies?"

Additionally, local researchers are expected to maintain 'scholarly distance'. In 2014, I applied for a research grant to study the peacebuilding approaches enacted by indigenous peoples in the Philippines post-9/11, when many indigenous communities have been militarized and hundreds of indigenous peoples were disappeared or assassinated by state security agents. I highlighted my connections to the proposed field sites, noting my previous professional work experience as an independent researcher and documentary filmmaker on indigenous peoples' rights in the Philippines. The funding organization denied my application and, upon my request, emailed a review:

> The reviewers felt that your project was very strong with a good focus on the link between indigeneity and securitization. The reviewers felt that the application demonstrated your deep involvement with the issue, which they applauded, with some concern that there was therefore little evidence of scholarly distance.[16]

In the review, 'scholarly distance' is deployed as a value opposite of 'deep involvement' where deeper political engagement signals a lack of scholarly objectivity. Scholarly distance, if read as a process of studying social phenomenon by a disengaged outsider, also is established as a favored intellectual practice that merits greater recognition compared to a scholar's deep involvement in social issues being studied. Debates around 'engaged anthropology' have been around arguably since the emergence of the discipline, and anthropologists operationalize the notion of 'participant' in participant observation differently, with some anthropologists becoming involved in activism, policy-making or social justice advocacy while others demonstrate their engagement through teaching and public education, social critique, and participatory and collaborative social research with local communities (see, for instance, Low

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[16] Email correspondence, July 2014.

and Merry 2010). Proponents and practitioners of engaged anthropology argue that

ethnographic detachment and disengaged anthropology in the face of social injustice, wars and

indigenous peoples' rights violations–among other global problems that anthropologists seek to

understand–are morally and ethically unacceptable and irrelevant to current geopolitical and

economic conditions of the world (Sanford and Angel-Ajani 2006; Speed 2006; Hale 2006;

Scheper-Hughes 1995). In this regard, local researchers from the Global South are compelled to

navigate their positionality as researcher and citizen, academic and advocate, and insider and

outside amidst rising human rights violations during armed conflicts. Rosa Cordillera Castillo

(2015), a Filipina anthropologist who studies the impact of the armed conflict in Mindanao,

notes the difficulty in assuming a position of neutrality in the face of human misery caused by

war. While being in both positions of witness and researcher is oftentimes difficult for many

researchers, the desire to be 'objective', 'neutral' and 'disengaged' when studying violent

conflicts in their countries is often what renders local researchers objects of suspicion among the

civilian communities they study.

The demands of Western academic institutions regarding scholarly distance and

defamiliarization are underpinned by a claim over what comprises objective, scholarly and

social scientific truth in ways that are largely predicated upon the experiences of specifically

white researchers from the Global North. Additionally, while reflexivity is acknowledged as a

central aspect of ethnographic research that allows for an examination of one's 'hidden

preconceptions that orient social thought' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012), reflexivity is also

predicated upon the contact between whiteness and white normativity[17] and the 'other'. What

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[17] White normativity refers not only to practices and ways of thinking held by whites in which white
people are the 'center of the universe', but also to the racial structures, particularly in the US, in which
whites occupy 'an unquestioned and unexamined place of esteem, power, and privilege' (Bell and
Hartmann 2007: 907).

concerns me is how most approaches to ethnographic reflexivity set the experiences of white

researchers as the dominant and universal benchmark of ethnographic discovery and objective

social scientific knowledge. At the same time, reflexivity serves as a practice and cultural form

that validates the white researcher's self-expression, self- discovery and self-critique, further

contributing to the social reproduction and embodiment of whiteness. Local researchers are

marginalized within this scheme of ethnographic knowledge production.

I belabour the ways in which the second aspect of double suspicion merits critical

examination to attend to how dominant intellectual and methodological frameworks often

conceal white normativity and Western-centric discourses behind a set of universal claims over

objective scholarship, scientific knowledge and intellectual contributions. Attending to the

double suspicion that local researchers face carries direct implications for the local and

ethnographic turn in the study of peacebuilding. Critical engagement with the liberal peace

framework can only go so far, if its perceived limits and failures are evaluated independently

from the long-term aim of social research to deconstruct, displace and disempower whiteness

(Bell and Hartmann 2007).

Conclusions

Throughout this article, I focused on suspicion as a lens to better understand the

challenges of ethnographic fieldwork in the shadow of armed conflict. I argue that suspicion

reveals the differential politics of danger and safety in fieldwork, illuminating our

understanding of the challenges that local researchers face that are often excluded from the

literature on peacebuilding. Geraldine Lee-Treweek and Stephanie Linkogle (2000) suggest that

the risks researchers experience often mirror the risks faced by the communities being studied.

While this is true in many situations, I argue that local researchers experience danger through

suspicion and its consequences differently from their foreign, specifically white, colleagues. Given that most armed conflicts today occur in developing countries and become more intense over time (Gates, et.al. 2016), local researchers who study war and peace in their countries of origin are compelled more than ever to better navigate the risks and dangers associated with ethnographic fieldwork. The concept of suspicion offers pedagogic information for aspiring local researchers.

More broadly, focusing on suspicion as a danger of high-risk ethnographic fieldwork allows me to foreground a new approach towards researcher safety. Researchers and academic institutions meticulously attend to the protection of human subjects while discussions of researcher safety remain secondary. In highlighting the ways in which local researchers who study armed conflicts and peacebuilding often become objects of more intense suspicion that can result in threats to their lives, I suggest that the risks experienced by local researchers and their research interlocutors are interconnected, requiring careful attention from the researcher and research institutions. Hence, universities and research funding institutions that require detailed plans for the protection of research participants also need to develop mechanisms that address and monitor researcher safety. Academic program and research advisers and their respective students can develop a system of reporting of researcher safety in the field, noting possible scenarios and levels of danger, ways to mitigate the challenges of fieldwork, and concrete steps that can be carried out by the university or research institutions to protect the safety of the researcher.

Further, I suggest the concept of double suspicion to better capture some of the epistemological concerns surrounding ethnography, reflexivity and positionality. I argue that local researchers experience suspicion from local interlocutors in their countries of origin who

are critical of Western education and from Western academic institutions that question the contributions of local researchers. I also argue that double suspicion reveals the limits and problems of the practice of ethnography and the production of ethnographic knowledge, most notably the (un)conscious reproduction of whiteness and white normativity that often are veiled by notions of defamiliarization, scholarly distance and neutrality. The emphasis in the local and ethnographic turn within the peacebuilding literature on the phenomenon of grassroots peacebuilding, and the limits of the liberal peace agenda, is an opportunity for the interdisciplinary discipline of Peace Studies to generate a new cohort of ethnographers and social researchers, local or foreign, who can facilitate the emancipatory objectives of the study and practice of peacebuilding rooted upon the displacement and disruption of whiteness and white supremacy.

I suggest that suspicion, as an analytical framework in EPR and as a conceptual angle in understanding war and peace, needs to be taken up in future studies. Suspicion can inform ethnographers of the internal dynamics and conflicts that shape violence and peacebuilding in particular places. For instance, suspicion and its circulation as knowledge can illustrate the social contradictions within communities where a population may appear homogenous. The warning I received from my research assistant signaled how, even within a community where everyone is related to each other to varying degrees, and where shared histories define their identity as indigenous peoples, there are political differences and antagonisms that are rooted less on kinship and more upon ideological and political commitments. Suspicion also is a dimension of ethnographic fieldwork that is important in understanding grassroots peacebuilding practices since it reveals the internal processes through which communities navigate the competing agendas of state and non-state armed actors.

Further, in attending to suspicion, ethnographers can better understand the precarity of the situations of everyday life in active armed conflict as well as the political processes, relationships and tensions within the communities they study. Because suspicion is a social process that is context specific, attending to the dynamics and dimensions of suspicion may allow ethnographers to produce fine-grained analysis of place-specific grassroots peacebuilding practices. Finally, suspicion can reveal the ways in which civilian communities become battlegrounds where contending claims over people's 'hearts and minds' are fought, offering insight into community-initiated negotiations over legitimacy and political power between civilians and armed actors.

CHAPTER 4

GEOGRAPHY AND PEACE: INSURGENT PEACE AS SPATIAL POWER

Introduction

In the last decade, the relationship between geography and peace has received

considerable attention from geographers and interdisciplinary peace scholars. Within

Geography, scholars have challenged the dominant understanding of peace as the 'opposite of

war' or an 'endpoint in a *telos* of violence', arguing that the geographies of war and peace, as

proven in post-conflict environments, are linked rather than mutually exclusive from each other.

Geographers also argue that, similar to war, peace emerges through a constellation of historical,

contextual, and place-specific processes and thus means multiple things that are different across

space and time. Among interdisciplinary scholars of peace, a spatial analytical framework is

increasingly becoming prominent as they shift their attention from international and state-

centric peacebuilding actors and projects toward 'local' peacebuilding actors and practices, as

well as toward understanding the relationship between physical geography and the emergence

of peace. Receiving far less attention in the conversations around the relationship of peace and

geography is the phenomenon of designating civilian communities as 'off limits' to war that

might advance our understanding of the spatialities of peace, especially if drawn from the

experiences of civilian communities taking the initiative to disrupt war and protect their own

lives in the context of an active armed conflict between state and non-state actors.

This article explores the ways in which civilian-led and community-led spatial practices

of designating communities as 'peace zones' contribute to an understanding of the geographies

of peace. By attending to community-led spatial practices of maintaining the peace zone in

relation to the spatial processes mobilized in carrying out insurgency and counterinsurgency by

state and non-state armed actors, it seeks to better understand whether alternative spatial practices of carving out new geographies of peace during war can offer a renewed conceptualization of peace as a spatial process of disrupting war that could move us from its dominant definition as the absence of violence. Drawing from the experiences of the indigenous community of Sagada, Philippines in maintaining a community-led peace zone for nearly 30 years as a response to a five-decade long armed conflict between the Philippine government and the New People's Army (NPA), an insurgent group waging a Maoist-inspired insurgency, I argue that peace can be viewed as a set of spatial relationships and a form of spatial power that disrupt the spatial logic of war and transform the relationships of civilian communities with the competing armed actors as a party with equal stakes in war and peace.

Recent contributions in the geographic study of peace broaden our understanding of 'what' peace is—as more than an absence of physical, structural, and cultural violence. Geographers examined the phenomena of post-conflict reconstruction and development (Stokke 2009; Kirsch and Flint 2011; Moore 2013), as well as subaltern social movements that counterpose against the consequences of war and social injustice (Koopman 2011; Megoran 2011; Williams and McConnell 2011), to re-conceptualize peace by elaborating the interconnected geographies of war, violence and peace. Meanwhile, interdisciplinary peace scholars have adopted a spatial perspective in examining peace and conflict. Peace researchers attend to geographic location, topography, physical infrastructures, and sites of encounters, interactions and relationships between international actors, state actors, non-state actors, and local actors to better understand 'where' peace is taking shape (Vogel 2018; Hancock 2017; Björkdahl and Kappler 2017; Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016; Henrizi 2014; Autesserre 2014). This article integrates these two emergent subfields in the study of peace—the Geographies of

Peace literature and the 'spatial turn' in interdisciplinary peace literature—to underscore that peace is a spatial process as much as it is a social and temporal phenomenon.

Further, I do this by studying the phenomenon of 'peace zones'. Peace zones are popularly understood as demilitarized or neutral geographic areas where protections to both people and place are guaranteed (Hancock and Mitchell 2007). While scholars have examined peace zones as places that offer protection to people who seek safety from hardship, harm, or threat to life, specifically in the context of war or armed violence, our understanding of the peace zone as a set of spatial relationships and a form of spatial power remain limited. In another article, I proposed the concept of *insurgent peace* to better capture the processes through which the indigenous peoples of Sagada maintain the peace zone and protect their own lives by disrupting the social, spatial, and temporal logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency imposed upon them by state and non-state armed actors (Macaspac forthcoming). In this article, I elaborate on the spatial dimensions of *insurgent peace* by attending to the ways in which the indigenous community of Sagada map out the peace zone in relation to the national and local dynamics of the armed conflict, as well as the state-centric peace process between the Philippine government and NPA. I argue that peace can be better understood as a set of spatial practices of peripheral communities that manifest through the carving out of alternative geopolitical spaces that allows them to transform their relationships to power, disrupt the spatial logics of war, and enact peaceful futures in the context of an active war. In this formulation, I assert that peace is a form of spatial power that re-cast the dominant geopolitical relationships, re-configure the geographies of war, and enable possibilities of survival amidst all forms of violence.

The article is divided into two parts. In the first part, I integrate the geographic study of peace with the recent spatial turn in peacebuilding literature. First, I trace the emergence of the

study of peace in Geography at the turn of the 20th century to survey the geographic literature on peace and understand some of the key factors that compelled geographers to focus on peace as a topic of geographic inquiry. I highlight the recent trends among geographers in renewing a critical orientation of the study of peace through the lens of early geographic scholarship, which invoked a critical view of the discipline's responsibility in opposing war and promoting a pro-peace agenda. I then proceed to provide an overview of the emergent 'spatial turn' in peacebuilding literature. I underscore key findings of interdisciplinary scholars of peace in terms of the geographic and spatial dimensions of peace. In the second part, I draw from field research examining the community-led peace zone of the indigenous community of Sagada, Philippines to understand the ways in which community leaders and members deploy peace as a form of spatial power that allows them to disrupt the processes of insurgency and counterinsurgency while carving out alternative geopolitical relationships with the Philippine government and Maoist rebel group. Finally, I conclude the article by summarizing the key assertions and contributions in the spatial turn toward the study of peace and highlighting future potential approaches that could broaden and deepen the geographic study of peace.

II. Geography and Peace

Emerging from an imbalance in geographic literature between robust studies of war over studies of peace comes forth a wager among select geographers to orient the discipline of Geography toward a peace agenda. Recognizing that Geography has been focused more on understanding war than peace, geographers implore the need to translate the scholarly theories of peace from other disciplines into a "disciplinary narrative" for geography (McConnell, et. al. 2014: 3). Over the last decade, geographers have re-conceptualized peace from its popular understanding of an endpoint in a *telos* of war toward its understanding as a dynamic place-

specific social process that takes shape differently across space and time. Geographers have

also challenged the dominant Liberal Peace framework, which is premised upon the role of the

nation-state as the broker of peace, and instead, argued that peace is enacted by a diverse set of

actors across multiple scales. Finally, geographers have extended the meaning of peace to

encompass values such as social justice, racial justice, solidarity, and equality.

As early as the beginning of Geography as a scholarly discipline, scholars thought about

the concept of peace as a geographic phenomenon. Élisée Reclus (1905), Peter Kropotkin (1885)

and Karl Wittfogel wrote about the importance and role of Geography in the promotion of

peace and challenged dominant geopolitical thinking of geographers who justified fascism and

imperialism (Mamadouh, 2005: 33). During the interwar years, Paul Vidal de la Blache (1922),

Jean Brunhes and Camille Vallaux (1921) reflected on the consequences of the Great War and the

possibilities for peace based on the collaboration between states. In response to 19th century

nationalism and the wars it spawned from 1914 to 1918, Vidal de la Blache and others promoted

regional geography and explored alternative forms of government such as "devolved regional

government from below to an integrated European government from above" in fostering inter-

state cooperation (Clifford, et. al. 2009: 15).

Isaiah Bowman (1921; 1924) echoed some of these reflections and probed the

responsibilities of powerful states and prospects for war and peace in some of the world's

region in a post-war "New World". Likewise, Wallace Atwood (1935) regarded Geography as a

vital discipline in promoting human understanding across the world through his geographic

and geologic studies (Cressey 1949: 298). Through these early interventions, and in contrast to

the imperial science and social Darwinism that dominated the early years of the discipline

through the work of Halford Mackinder (1904), Rudolph Kjellen (1916) and Friedrich Ratzel

(1923) (Livingstone, 1993), Geography became increasingly known as an integrative science of physical and human geography that promoted cooperation and universal human understanding across the world.

A few geographers also became prominent due to their direct involvement in helping broker peace during the interwar years. For instance, Bowman served as an advisor to US President Woodrow Wilson and represented the American Geographic Society (AGS) at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. Other geographers from France and Germany also lent their expertise in shaping international relations (Mamadouh 2005: 32). However, legacies of the German *Geopolitik* thinking continued through the work of Nicholas Spykman (1944) and Bowman (1924) in their analyses of the rise of the US as a new global power, as well as in directly shaping the US' strategic interests. Thus, early interest in peace framed as universal human understanding and cooperation were subsumed under a more dominant political geographic study of peace based on a balance of power and international relations that remained focused on the state, statecraft and foreign policy.

'Paradigm shifts' and fissures

The decades after World War II led to a bourgeoning of critical geographic study. A series of paradigm shifts animated the development and expansion of Geography as an academic discipline, including a lesser attention to warfare, state system, and power relations (Mamadouh 2005: 35). But while Peace Studies, Peace Science, and Peace Economics emerged in the 1950s in the US and Europe as interdisciplinary fields of scholarship focused on peace (Lawler 1995), the study of peace did not have a revival within Geography after the war.

One exception was Walter Isard, a pioneer of regional studies and the field of Peace Science and Peace Economics (Isard 1960; 1969; 1975; 1988). In 1969, Isard published a collection

of papers, *Vietnam: Some Basic Issues and Alternatives* (1969). The collection featured articles on

counterinsurgency warfare, game-theory, and development of techniques to escalate the war,

and was launched at a conference in 1969 held by Isard's Peace Research Society. However,

scholars affiliated with another organization, International Peace Research Association (IPRA),

lodged a strong criticism and condemned the papers published by Isard and his colleagues that

"unquestioningly accepted the legitimacy of the campaign against North Vietnam" and for

"uncritically reflecting an American perspective" (Lawler 1995: 71).

Meanwhile, in France, Yves Lacoste (1976; 1984) wrote about 'subversive geopolitics' as a

critical interrogation of the consequences of the US war in Vietnam and the role of geographic

knowledge in war, peace and foreign policy. In the 1980s, building upon Lacoste's influential

work, two edited volumes, David Pepper and Alan Jenkins' (1985) *The Geography of Peace and*

War and Nurit Kliot and Stanley Waterman's (1991) *The Political Geography of Conflict and Peace,*

critically examined the multiple geographies of war and peace. In the chapter *"From 'Geopolitic'*

to 'Geopolitique': Converting a Discipline for War to a Discipline for Peace" in Kliot and Waterman's

edited volume, John O'Loughlin and Henning Heske offered a geopolitical definition of peace:

> "A geopolitics of peace to us means a geographical and political science, which
>
> investigates global and regional social, political and economic processes in order
>
> to provide a foundation for conflict resolution and common security. It is
>
> essential that consideration of the operation of global-scale (structural)
>
> mechanisms as well as local conditions must be broadened to include power-
>
> political, ideological, geographic and economic explanation" (O'Loughlin and
>
> Heske 1991: 53).

A key contribution from O'Loughlin and Heske's definition of peace is the extension of the geographic study of conflicts and peace beyond the domain of the state and military, as well as echoing Norwegian peace scholar Johan Galtung's (1964; 1969) conceptualization of 'positive peace' as the 'absence of structural violence', which increasingly was adopted by many American scholars of peace (Lawler 1995).

Critical Geopolitics and peace

The emergence of the field of Critical Geopolitics (Dalby 1996; Dalby and O'Tuathail 1996; O'Tuathail 1996; Agnew 2003) propelled studies of peace that attended to a localized analysis of peace. A new mode of global economy stimulated by transnational networks and interactions within different localities and city-regions led many geographers to recognize a new spatiality of power (Agnew 2003; 2005). This recognition challenged the traditional state-centric geopolitical analysis of classical geopolitics and prompted the emergence of the field of critical geopolitics, which seeks to reveal an understanding of power and politics away from the territorial and legal frameworks of the nation-state toward the study of localized geopolitical processes (Dalby 1991; O'Tuathail 1996; 2010). One of the many implications of Critical Geopolitics in the study of peace is that it has allowed geographers to understand peace at a local scale through a grounded approach to geopolitical processes. Taking seriously the localized dynamics of violence, as well as localized enactments of peace, geographers argued for a more nuanced understanding of peace as place-specific processes, moving away from a state-centric definition of peace as interstate cooperation, or the opposite of interstate war.

The events surrounding the 9/11 attacks bolstered the call of select geographers for an explicit peace agenda in Geography. On the one hand, 9/11 and the Bush's administration's "Global War on Terror" heightened awareness among geographers in particular, and people in

the Western world in general, of the contemporary consequences of war. On the other hand, the ability of non-state armed actors to transcend territorial boundaries and nation-state sovereignty challenged the hegemony of the US as a global power. These events prompted geographers to explore the study of peace in the context of a renewed awareness of the impact of war, its changing nature, and the new spatiality of power that challenge previous geographic understanding of war and peace as restricted within the analysis of the nation-state.

Shifts in geopolitical thinking and closer attention to scale became more evident in succeeding geographic analysis of war and peace. Colin Flint's (2005) edited volume, *Geographies of War and Peace*, explores a range of themes, such as religious and ethno-national conflict, 'resource wars', political ecology, and the intersections of war, drugs and peace through multi-scalar analysis. A Special Issue of the *Annals* featured articles addressing an assessment of conflicts "in all parts of the world, at a variety of scales, including both international and intranational disputes" (Kobayashi 2009: 819). In her introduction of the special issue, Audrey Kobayashi (2009) re-emphasizes the importance of scale in evaluating the impact of war:

"From the global to the local, the significance of scale is manifest technologically,

in the differences between carpet bombing and suicide bombs, or in the

difference between the use of conventional firearms and the body itself as a

weapon." (Kobayashi 2009: 821)

The attention to scale in studying the geographies of war and peace allowed geographers to broaden and deepen their analyses of the complex dynamics of how conflicts emerge, continue, and end, both locally and internationally.[18] Further, a multi-scalar approach to geopolitics opened up theoretical and methodological pathways toward a critical study of the bio-political

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[18] For a discussion of scale as analysis in Geography, see Leitner 1997; Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard 2002; Sheppard 2002; Sheppard and McMaster 2004; Marston 2000; Moore 2008.

and gendered dimensions of the violence of war through extending the analysis to the scale of the individual.[19]

Geographies of war and peace

Geographers also challenge the dominant understanding of peace as the opposite of war or an endpoint in a *telos* of violence. Rather than seeing war and peace as distinct and separate categories, geographers assert that these two phenomena are linked. Colin Flint (2005: 4) posits that "War/peace and geography are mutually constituted and socially constructed". Amy Ross (2011: 197) also reminds us that the line that distinguishes "what *counts* as war, and what *counts* as peace" (Ross 2011:197) is not a permanent boundary, and instead, is very subjective and contingent on ideological, political, and context-specific processes. Geographic studies of post-war reconstruction and development elaborate the evidences of the blurred boundaries between war and peace. In post-war reconstruction, the popular understanding of the dichotomy between war and peace breaks down. For example, most peacebuilding efforts, specifically under the Liberal Peace framework, are carried out through militarized political relations and institutions, and reproduce social injustices (Le Billion 2008).

Further, Kristian Stokke's (2009) study of the peace dividend as a component of the peace process between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) proves how post-war reconstruction efforts are deeply connected with wartime political relationships and structures wherein the peace dividend was transformed into a vehicle for the government and rebels to gather political support. Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Carl Dahlman's (2011) study of the geopolitics of refugee returns in Bosnia and Herzegovina also reveals that it is impossible to cut a clean break between a time of war and peace nor a transition from war to

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[19] See Kobayashi and Peake 1994; Staeheli and Lawson 1995; Pratt 2000; Hyndman 2001; Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2003; Staeheli, Kofman and Peake 2004; Dyck 2005.

post-war. As evidenced by the fraught political dynamics that shaped the return of displaced persons and refugees to their former communities as part of peace agreements and postwar recovery, a post-war scenario indicates a continuation of wartime legacies rather than its final end (Ó Tuathail and Carl Dahlman 2011). Meanwhile, Scott Kirsch and Colin Flint (2011) demonstrate the continuing war legacy during post-conflict reconstruction wherein a new set of relationships and geopolitical landscapes shaped by militarized power relations take place during a time of peace. Adam Moore's (2013) comparative study of peacebuilding in two Bosnian towns, Mostar and Brčko, also reveals the ways in which wartime social processes, in fact, actively shape the success and failure of peacebuilding practices. Despite a shared context of an intense conflict and ethnic cleansing between 1992 and 1995, the striking contrast in terms of the consequences of the international peacebuilding strategies in the two towns were produced by the infrastructure of political institutions, sequencing of economic and political reforms, practices and structure of international peacebuilding actors, as well as the local and regional legacies of war within the two towns.

Further, geographers contribute to the understanding of peace through a critical study of peace in relation to war, violence, and power. Colin Flint, etal.'s (2009) concept of "conflictspace" reveals the ways power is embedded within complex mixture of relationships, networks, and spatialities, which illuminates our understanding of peace in relation to how violence can thrive and move seamlessly across multiple geographies and matrices of power relations. Meanwhile, James Tyner and Joshua Inwood's (2011) concept of "nonkilling geography" critiques the interconnectedness of structural and institutional violence that legitimizes militarism, direct violence and killings as a requirement of geopolitical, geoeconomic and geosocial power. Amy Ross (2011: 197) also grounds her studies of peace into a critique of

power and understanding of equity. The overlapping geographies of war and post-war and peacebuilding captured within the studies mentioned above, as well as critical approaches toward the spatialities of war and peace, underscore the contributions of geographers in the contemporary understanding of peace as a set of social, spatial, and temporal processes constantly shaped by power and violence.

Geographies of Peace

In addition to shifts in the geographic study of war and peace from a state-centric to a multi-scalar and localized approach, as well as contributions toward understanding the geographies of war and peace as interconnected and mutually constitutive, geographers engaged in a disciplinary self-reflection by surveying the contributions of geographic literature toward understanding war and peace (see Mamadouh 2005; Kobayashi 2009). In the first survey, Virginie Mamadouh (2005) assessed the geopolitical study of war and peace in two key time periods, 1897 to 1945 and 1945 to 2005. Mamadouh's largely positive assessment over the shift in Geography from being a discipline that assisted war-waging states to a "science for peace" (2005: 41). Further, Mamadouh cited that contemporary geographers now view war as a "condemnable collective behavior" and re-oriented the objectives of their studies from "war winning to war avoidance" (Mamadouh 2005: 41). Meanwhile, in a succeeding assessment of the geographic literature on peace and armed conflict, which appeared as a Special Issue in the *Annals* in 2009, Audrey Kobayashi (2009) emphasized the role of geographers in shaping the ways in which the discipline can facilitate the creation of the conditions of peace.

Following these two surveys, geographers called for an explicit peace agenda within the discipline. First, Nick Megoran (2011) proposed that Geography needs a disciplinary conceptualization of peace. Compared to other disciplines such as International Relations, Peace

Studies, and Biblical Studies that have developed discourses of peace, Geography lacks

disciplinary definition of peace. In fact, as Megoran and others pointed out, peace (along with

war) does not have an entry in the *Dictionary of Human Geography* or in the *Dictionary of

Geopolitics* (Megoran, McConnell, and Williams 2016).

Second, geographers proposed to broaden the conceptualization of peace and move

beyond a traditional geopolitical analysis focused on state-centric processes, as well as an

understanding of peace largely as 'negative peace'. Megoran proposed "pacific geopolitics" as a

framework to shift the study of world geopolitics toward the promotion of "peaceful and

mutually enriching human coexistence" (Megoran 2010: 382). Meanwhile, Fiona McConnell and

Philippa Williams reminded us that peace—like violence—is highly differentiated, and is better

understood as "situated knowledges within different cultural settings" (Williams and

McConnell 2011: 929). Echoing the argument that peace is differentially shaped across space and

time, Koopman (2011) suggested re-thinking peace as "peaces" to emphasize that

> "peace means different things at different scales, as well as to different groups, and at
>
> different times and places. Peace is not the same everywhere anymore than war
>
> is" (Koopman 2011: 194).

The notion of 'many peaces' is reflected in a recent edited volume on the geographic study of

peace, *Geographies of Peace,* where scholars proposed to include studies of "development, the

politics of asylum, inter-communal relations, transnationalism, post-conflict reconstruction,

grassroots movements, human rights, boundary delimitations and global ecopolitics" as

geopolitical issues related to peace (McConnell, etal. 2014: 255).

Third, geographers approached the study of peace through the lens of nonviolence. For

Megoran, he proposed an understanding of peace as nonviolence because he views the latter as

"a compelling interpretation of the teachings of Jesus Christ… that violence is to be confronted through love" (2011: 186). Meanwhile, Simon Springer also defines peace as nonviolence, yet drawing from a different political perspective: anarchism. Springer revisits Kropotkin's anarchism and proposed an "integral anarchism" that drew upon theories of pluralist politics of consensus with dissent and radical democracy (2014: 6). In reviving some of the earlier anarchist literature in Geography, Springer proposed a re-thinking of anarchism as nonviolence, asserting that "equality is a *sine qua non* of peace". For Springer, anarchism and peace share the same goals and visions of a society: "a world without war, without domination, without bondage, and without violence" (Springer 2016: 145; italics in the original).

However, Jenny Loyd (2012), makes a distinction between nonviolence and what she called "antiviolence". Antiviolence refers to the

> "practical work of theorizing and challenging state policing of sexuality, mobility and citizenship; forging ties with apparently unrelated issues and movements including HIV/AIDS, environmental justice, antiwar, anti-prison, and decolonization; and building alternative forms of justice and harm reduction, including gang peacemaking, community accountability initiatives, and alliances with groups fighting for better public education, environmental justice, and just economies" (Loyd 2012: 486).

Loyd proposed the framework of antiviolence as a holistic social agenda of peace that simultaneously critiques multiple forms of violence and sutures various social movements addressing colonial, racial and gendered violence.

Finally, geographers proposed a normative framework in the geographic study of peace.

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In placing the geographic literature on peace in conversation with the literature on "trans-rational peace research", Christopher Courtheyn (2017) proposed the concept of "radical trans-relational peace" as a normative framework in theorizing peace that attends to "race, the biosphere, and autonomous-solidarity politics" (Courtheyn 2017: 3).

'Spatial turn' in peace literature

Interdisciplinary literature of peace has adopted a geographic perspective and shifted their attention toward the spatialities of peace and peacebuilding. First, in the last twenty years, as an impact of largely unsuccessful international peace missions in the 1990s in protecting millions of civilian lives affected by wars in many places in the world, peace researchers re-oriented their studies toward 'local' peacebuilding. This "local turn" in peacebuilding research produced studies of peace that focused upon local actors and processes as key toward sustainable peace (Richmond 2013; Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013; Mac Ginty 2008).

More recently, interdisciplinary peace scholars have paid attention to concepts of space and place and relationships between geography and peace. Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler's *Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation: Peace, Space and Place* examines the relationship between peace, space, and place. For Björkdahl and Kappler, places reveal the "tangible and intangible legacy of conflict, ground transition from conflict towards peace, and situate peacebuilding processes and actors" (2017: 1). Through their investigation of post-conflict environments, specifically in Bosnia–Herzegovina, Kosovo, Northern Ireland, South Africa and Cyprus, they examined space and place as "vehicles through which transitions from war to peace can be explored" (2017: 1). Further, they attended to the types of spatial agency mobilized in the transformation of space and place in post-conflict environments. Meanwhile, Birte Vogel (2018) focuses on the physical space of the Buffer Zone, a UN-administered

demilitarized zone that divides the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities built in 1964

following violent incidents between the two communities. Vogel examined the ways in which

the buffer zone's geographical location served as a 'neutral ground' that shaped the emergence

of civil society peace activism, and proposed the concept of "peace spaces" to refer to "spaces of

civil resistance against the discourse of conflict and violence in their many forms" (2018: 5).

Landon Hancock (2017) examined the consequences and potentials of local peace zones

to national peace processes. Situating his research of local peace zones within the realization of

the 'failures' of a series of peacebuilding projects sponsored by international organizations and

institutions in post-conflict environments, Hancock focused on local agency as the 'missing

element' in understanding the success of peacebuilding. Complementing Hancock's

investigation of local agency is Severine Auteserre's (2014) *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the*

Everyday Politics of International Intervention, which examines the daily practices and habits of

international peacebuilders, including foreign diplomats, defense officers, NGO workers, and

staff of international organizations, who are working on post-conflict reconstruction and

development projects within conflict zones.

Through Autesserre's investigation of the tensions between 'local expertise' and

'technical knowledge', and between international peace workers and local communities, she

revealed the ways in which the behavior, practices, and subculture of 'expats' as a group of

experts separated from the local world they operate in shape the outcomes of international

peacebuilding projects. Further, in focusing upon the practices of international peace workers

rather than state-led policies, her study illuminates a different set of spatialities at play in

international peace projects that are often obscured by a default 'macro' view of international

peacebuilding, which focuses on state actors and their roles in conflict resolution or post-conflict development.

While also focusing on international peacebuilding efforts, Annika Henrizi (2014) examined the ways in which external intervention in Iraq worked alongside the creation of spaces for Iraqi women's local agency. Looking at women's NGOs in Baghdad working around projects related to peacebuilding, Henrizi asserted that these NGOs can be viewed as "hybrid spaces" that reveal the "connectivities and hybridities" between international and local actors and processes (Henrizi 2014: 82). Further, Henrizi asserted that a relational conceptualization of space in tandem with agency is necessary to better capture the gendered agency in post-conflict environments that is often neglected in peacebuilding research.

The emergent literature on peace geographies and the interdisciplinary literature on peace and peacebuilding that adopt a spatial perspective underscore the vital role of geography in our understanding of the phenomenon of peace. But while a spatial analytical framework is increasingly becoming prominent in critical peacebuilding research, as well as attention to physical geography and geographic location, there remains a need to better understand peace as a set of spatial relationships and a form of spatial power that disrupt the spatial logics of war and violence. To contribute to the conversations on the relationships between geography and peace, I now turn to my investigation of the community-led peace zone of the indigence community of Sagada in the Philippines.

III. Insurgent peace

Between October and November 1988, three children were killed in the *poblacion*, Sagada's town center, in separate incidents involving the military and rebels. Two of these children were killed when a soldier who had been drinking alcohol opened fire in front of the

public market in October 1988. Members of the community, led by then vice mayor Thomas "Champag" Killip, protested against the killings and demanded a 'pull-out' of the military who were encamped in the elementary school in Sagada. After learning about the NPA's plan to conduct an ambush of the military encampment to revenge against the deaths of the two children, Killip along with other community leaders met with rebel leaders to argue against the plan.However, the rebels pushed through with their plan and staged an attack on the military encampment in the elementary school on and early morning in November 1988. Another child was killed in the crossfire that ensued between the rebels and military.

Following this incident, members of the community protested against the violence and the deaths of the children. Community leaders and members demanded that both military and rebels leave Sagada. Municipal leaders, led by Killip, wrote a municipal resolution in consultation with tribal elders and civil society leaders calling for Sagada's 'demilitarization' and laying out the community's twelve-point demand to the military and rebels. These demands include a ban on all operations, patrols, checkpoints, and activities of armed groups, both military and rebels, within the municipality.

Community members sent delegations to Manila to solicit support from the Philippine government and conducted dialogues with rebels for both actors to acknowledge the legitimacy of the community's demands. A Manila-based NGO, Coalition of Peace, which was focused on peacebuilding during the post-dictatorship Philippines, had been popularizing the concept of 'peace zones' and were supportive of the community initiative of the indigenous peoples of Sagada. In 1989, the Philippine Senate, through a Senate resolution, recognized Sagada as a 'peace zone' along with six other communities nationwide to acknowledge local peacebuilding efforts.

While the peace zone in Sagada has been highlighted in the literature of the peace zone as a local initiative (Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Avruch & Jose 2007; Coronel-Ferrer 2005; Santos 2005; Garcia 1997), its emergence is rooted within a broader context of pro-democracy social movements, which crystallized in response to the Marcos dictatorship, state terrorism, and human rights violations. Further, I assert that the contemporary dynamics of the peace zone are better understood within the historical context of the experiences of indigenous peoples, specifically in the Cordillera region, throughout the five decades of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Viewed this way, I argue that the community-led peace zone in Sagada can be better understood as a set of spatial practices of the indigenous community that allows them to carve an alternative geopolitical space in relation to the state and rebels. Further, as a geopolitical space that lies outside of the control of the armed actors, the peace zone allows the indigenous community of Sagada to transform their relationships with the military and rebels from being passive witnesses (and at times, victims) of the armed conflict toward active actors in re-shaping the process of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Through the peace zone, I argue that the indigenous peoples of Sagada not only prevent civilian deaths and internal displacement—consequences of the armed conflict that many indigenous communities experience, particularly post -9/11 after the military prioritized indigenous communities as target of the state's re-configured counterinsurgency efforts— but also disrupt the spatial logics of insurgency and counterinsurgency and enact peaceful futures within the context of an active war. Through this formulation, I argue that peace can be better understood as a form of spatial power that allows peripheral communities to re-cast the dominant geopolitical relationships, re-configure the geographies of war, and enable possibilities of survival in the midst of violence.

Insurgent peacebuilding

The peace zone in Sagada emerged as a community response to the consequences of the armed conflict between, on the one hand, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and its military, and on the other, a Maoist rebel group led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, New People's Army, and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (CPP-NPA-NDFP). In contrast to experiences of many indigenous peoples across the country where their communities often serve as battlegrounds for the military and rebels, for nearly 30 years, the indigenous community of Sagada, to an extent, has effectively regulated military and rebel operations in their community and prevented conflict-related civilian deaths and internal displacement.

While the state officially recognized the peace zone in Sagada through a Senate resolution in 1992, the military often disregards the regulations set by the community. In 2013, military officials stated that they would no longer respect the peace zone (Cabreza 2013). Within the NPA, rebel leaders in the Cordillera region labeled and criticized the peace zone as a CIA-initiated counterinsurgency strategy (Udyaw 2014). Given the delegitimization by both military and rebels of the community's efforts to enforce the terms of the peace zone, community leaders and members of Sagada are compelled to constantly negotiate with both armed actors and assert the legitimacy of the peace zone.

In another article, I examined three concepts to refer to the ways in which the indigenous community of Sagada maintain the peace zone: *internal norms*, *interdependence*, and *refusal* (Macaspac forthcoming). First, efforts of community leaders and members in negotiating with the state and rebels not to engage in armed violence within the municipality's territory are anchored in internal norms called *innayan*, a set of societal taboo or *lawa*, including killing or

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doing harm to a neighbor, which renders legitimacy to community demands toward armed

actors to 'pull out' from Sagada and not to treat their communities as battlefields of insurgency

and counterinsurgency.

Second, the legitimacy of the peace zone can not exclusively rely upon the enforcement

of community's internal norms to groups of largely external actors (i.e., military and rebels,

etc.). Rather, the community recognized through decades of practice that constant and relentless

negotiations between the community and state and rebels are necessary, if the community

wants for the peace zone to work. Through decades of holding these negotiations, I asserted

that the indigenous community of Sagada transforms their political relationships with the state

and rebels. I argued that constant negotiations led by the community foster an interdependent

relationship, rather than isolation, between the community and state and rebels. Relationships

of interdependence, as evident in the case of Sagada, are not necessarily harmonious, mutual, or

neutral. Negotiations with state and rebels are complex and difficult, particularly as both armed

actors repeatedly delegitimized the community's efforts in maintaining Sagada as a peace zone.

Third, the collective capacity of the indigenous community to negotiate with the state

and rebels and maintain the legitimacy of the peace zone to a certain extent demonstrate the

politics of refusal, or the capacity of the community to transgress the spatial logics of insurgency

and counterinsurgency. All in all, these three concepts, internal norms, interdependence, and

refusal, compose what I call *insurgent peace* to refer to the processes through which civilian

communities disrupt the armed conflict and transform the ways in which the state and rebels

view civilian populations from passive actors toward acknowledging the sovereignty of the

community with equal stakes in the conduct of war and pursuit of peace. Building upon these

findings, in this article, I elaborate on the spatial processes mobilized by the indigenous

community of Sagada in maintaining the peace zone. I argue that the three concepts of internal norms, interdependence and refusal that comprise insurgent peace can also be viewed as a form of spatial power.

Peace as spatial power

In 2014, some residents in one of the southern *barangays* of Sagada sent a message to their *baranggay* captain notifying him that they woke up one morning to see armed police officials in uniform camped right outside their houses. Anxious about possible consequences of an armed confrontation from the presence of an armed police unit within their backyards, the residents sought help from the *baranggay* captain to intervene and ask the police to leave. "We were very surprised", the *baranggay* captain recalled upon learning about the incident, "we were not even informed by the team leader (of the police) that they will conduct an activity or even coming there. When the residents in the house near where the police were encamped asked one of the police officials, the officer said they will just be there for a day and then leave the next day. But then, they stayed there for two days! Residents told me that they (police officers) slept near the houses at night and that there were there to conduct (counterinsurgency) operations. For me, it was good to know that they will leave soon, but when they left, they just went to another nearby *baranggay*" (personal interview 2014).

Convening the rest of the *baranggay* officials for an emergency meeting, the captain and one councilor typed a resolution to demand that the police unit immediately leave Sagada. By the next day, the captain traveled to the provincial capital of Bontoc to deliver the resolution to the provincial police director. The captain was not able to secure an audience with the police director, but left the resolution to another official. "Anyway, I am telling you verbally and your colleagues that the residents do not want the police to be (camped) there", the captain said.

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"They fear for their safety. And that's really the purpose why we don't want any military or NPA or any group (coming in). We had bad experiences (in the past) so that's the problem. They should not just camp there (residential areas). It's a no-no. We will not allow. Even if the NPA will camp there, the community will also say no, you (NPA) go to areas where it's far from the residential areas. That's our sentiment because of past experiences in the *baranggay* and in any *baranggay* in Sagada" (personal interview 2015).

I highlight this interview with the *baranggay* captain to refer to some of the ways in which community leaders and members of Sagada enforce the regulations set by the community in maintaining Sagada as a peace zone. The refusal of the community against armed encampments and presence within Sagada can be viewed as a form of spatial power that allows residents to prevent possible consequences to the lives of civilians that may arise out of the presence of armed groups in their communities. While peace is often understood through its definition as absence of violence, I argue that these community-initiated processes of negotiations and refusal reveal the ways in which peace also refers to the collective capacities of civilian populations in asserting sovereignty and control over their communities and disentangle themselves from state-sponsored violence and counterinsurgency.

Another incident demonstrates the ways in which peace as a form of spatial power allows the community to disrupt violence. During a town fiesta in February 2015, some NPA members staged an ambush of a police official from Sagada who the rebels alleged to be an intelligence agent. According to news reports, the police officer and a niece was driving within the *poblacion* between 10 and 11 am when two armed men opened fire. The police officer sustained four gunshot wounds, but survived after being rushed to a hospital in Sagada. In an online statement published by the NPA after the attack, the rebels claimed that the Sagada

resident and police officer "continuously spearheaded intelligence operations against the revolutionary movement in the Province and the Cordillera region" (The Cordillera Sun 2015). In response to the incident, a few community leaders met with some rebel leaders.

"The message that we gave them," recalled one of the leaders who participated in the meeting, "is that we know you're (rebels) fighting the government. We know that. So, even government laws you will not respect. But there is a parallel existing traditional governance among our communities. You should have placed this (allegation) in our processes and in our dynamics before you even thought of going through that drastic action. They were not prepared to answer!" The leader continued to explain the customary processes when similar allegations happen in the community. "If someone committed a wrongdoing, we usually ask the elders. So the elders will call for a community meeting. They will summon the person (involved). Sometimes the elders will advice for that person to leave the town and live somewhere before anything happens. But at least they (community elders) are the ones who give the sanctions. Rather than immediately arriving at a decision to kill the person for whatever reason but telling the person to get out because the person can affect the peace in the community. That's what we presented to the NPA. What you (NPA) did was wrong. You did not go through this process, an error they accepted. And so we said that there will be no more summary executions here in Sagada. And they agreed" (personal interview 2016).

The moment described above captures the processes through which the concepts of internal norms, interdependence and refusal that comprise what I call insurgent peace are mobilized by the community to maintain the legitimacy and effectivity of the peace zone. Further, within these constant negotiations with both state and non-state armed actors, the indigenous community of Sagada builds upon its capacity of altering the ways in which the

state armed actors and rebels control Sagada as part of an imagined national space produced

through practices of insurgency and counterinsurgency. The concept of peace is often described

as an absence of violence or an endpoint in a long *durée* of violence, which signals the temporal

character of peace as a period in time. Recent studies of peace elaborate on the social processes

that make up peace, linking peace with agency and resistance against violence and injustice. In

this article, I argue that peace also can be understood as a spatial phenomenon, a form of spatial

power that allows peripheral communities to re-configure space and re-gain control over their

communities against the consequences of the imposition of war by state and non-state armed

actors.

Conclusion

Throughout this article, I underscored the important role of geography in our

understanding of peace and the relationships between space, place, and peace. Tracing the

emergence of the subfields of Geographies of Peace within Human Geography, I highlighted the

contributions of researchers in understanding the multiple meanings of peace that challenge

dominant and normative discourses and practices of a state-centric approach to peace. I also

underscored current efforts of geographers in taking stock of geographic contributions in the

study of peace and re-evaluating the ways in which Geography as a scholarly discipline

contribute toward the promotion of peace. I then also outlined the emergent critical

peacebuilding literature that increasingly adopts a spatial analytical framework, revealing the

increasing importance of a geographic understanding of peace. Drawing from my empirical

study of a community-led peace zone in Sagada, Philippines, I examined the ways in which

peace can be viewed as a form of spatial power manifested through collective assertions of what

I call insurgent peace by peripheral communities marginalized by war. Further, I assert that by

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attending to the alternative spatial practices of peripheral communities in protecting their own lives outside the purview of state and non-state actors yields a broader understanding of the spatiality of peace beyond existing definitions of absence of violence or wartime agency and resistance.

The implications of the formulation of peace as a form of spatial power mobilized by peripheral communities to disrupt violence and transform their relationships to power could broaden the scope of the emergent geographic study of peace and the spatial turn in critical peace studies. For example, contemporary movements that are broadly shaped by feminist, queer, transgender, immigrant, labor rights, and anti-racist frameworks in the US and beyond are rich sites to broaden our understanding of peace as spatial power and beyond the context of an armed conflict. Attending to 'sanctuary movements' in the US, in particular, could deepen our understanding of peace as a form of spatial power as captured within the experiences of undocumented immigrants and their allies in carving spaces of protection for families and children of undocumented immigration status outside the purview of the state.

In highlighting the spatial dimension of peace as alternative spatial practices of disrupting violence and transforming political relationships, this article has demonstrated that further questions and critical studies of the spatiality of peace and the connection between geography and peace are still needed. While there is an increasing scholarly attention to space and place in the study of peace, the spatialities and geographies of peace also refer to the ways in which mobility, positionality, networks, and scale come together in the pursuit and maintenance of peace and peaceful conditions. As such, there remains a greater need for peace researchers within and outside Geography to view peace as a spatial process, as well as spatial politics. In maintaining a spatial analytical framework in studying peace, scholars can further

advance our understanding of peace as a dynamic process of geopolitical transformation and

spatial power.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Over the last two decades, there has been an increased attention to the subject of peace by scholars in response to the changing geographies, actors, and processes that produce not only inter- and intrastate wars but also other forms of violence and cruelty in many parts of the world. In Political Geography, the topic of peace has been approached primarily through critical empirical research on violence and peace advocacy within the discipline. On the one hand, geographers study peace through a study of violence, war, and international peacebuilding (Flint 2005; Flint and Kirsch 2012; Moore 2013; Ross 2011; Tyner and Inwood 2011) and through understanding the processes mobilized in making and sustaining peaceful relations across different actors (Koopman 2011; Williams 2014; Woon 2014). On the other hand, some geographers advocate for peace by investigating the discipline's historical and present linkages with institutions and practices that produce war (i.e., military-industrial complex, military intelligence, etc.), calling for a 'demilitarization' of geographic knowledge production and popularizing a 'pro-peace' research agenda (Kobayashi 2009; Tyner and Inwood 2011; Megoran 2011; Sheppard 2013) and a disciplinary narrative of peace (McConnell, et.al. 2014). More broadly, geographers have been re-thinking peace from its popular understanding of the absence of physical, structural and cultural violence (Galtung, 1964; 1969; 1985; 1990) to move away from a negative definition of peace as an opposite of war. They have broadened the meaning of peace to encompass values such as justice, friendship, solidarity, anti-violence, non-killing, anarchism, and equality (Williams & McConnell 2011; Ross 2011; Koopman 2011; Tyner and Inwood 2011; Loyd 2012; Springer 2014) and challenged the notion of peace as an endpoint in a *telos* of war, asserting that peace consists of everyday practices and processes (Megoran

2011; Williams and McConnell 2011; McConnell, et.al. 2014). While these contributions allow us to better capture the "multiple situated knowledges of peace" (Koopman 2011; Williams & McConnell 2011)--a variety of "peaces", as Sara Koopman asserts (Koopman 2011)-- there is a tendency to conjure peace as everything good and aspirational and run the risk of turning peace as an "empty signifier" (Laclau 1996) where peace means everything and nothing.

In this dissertation, I elaborated on the social and spatial dimensions of peace to better understand peace beyond the dominant definition of absence of violence. As I have demonstrated in Chapter 2, I examined the ways in which peace is enacted by focusing on community-led peace practices. I did this through investigating a community-led peace zone maintained by the indigenous peoples of Sagada, Philippines to reveal the kind of work required from civilian communities to protect their own lives in the context of almost fifty years of ongoing insurgency and counterinsurgency. Within this context, as my findings reveal, peace refers to the processes through which marginalized populations refuse and disrupt the spatial logic of violence imposed upon them, and transform their political relationships to state and non-state armed actors. I argued that the constant and complex processes of community-led negotiations and refusal cannot be reduced to either of the default understanding of the phenomenon of peace zones as expressions of 'neutrality', or a normative framework I understanding civilian-led peace practices through the lens of 'resistance' or 'agency'. Rather, I argued that these dominant frameworks of neutrality, resistance, and agency simplify and tend to obscure the prefigurative and emancipatory content of community-led practices as illustrated by the experiences of indigenous peoples of Sagada in maintaining the peace zone. I proposed the term *insurgent peace* to capture the collective refusal of violence that allows marginalized communities to re-configure their political relationships beyond the categories of 'citizens' or

'victims' and rather as a party with equal stakes in the war and peace. I argued that the concept

of insurgent peace also signals an alternative geography of peace beyond the interactions

between international elite actors from the Global North and communities affected by violence

in post-conflict settings in the Global South that often are chosen as research sites of peace

scholarship. Rather, I asserted that insurgent peace also re-centers studies and discussions of

peace on civilian populations and marginalized communities and community-led processes in

relation to competing structures of power.

In Chapter 3, I extended this approach to the ethnographic approach in studying

peace by reflecting on the stakes and challenges of ethnographic peace research from the

perspective of local researchers from the Global South. Focusing on suspicion as a phenomenon

encountered in ethnographic research, this chapter offers a reflective account of some of the

distinct challenges faced by scholars from the Global South in studying peace in the context of

an active armed conflict in their countries. I assert that acknowledging the differential politics of

ethnographic peace research enables important contributions to emergent discussions around

decolonization in peace research and International Relations, specifically, (see, for instance,

Sabaratnam 2017; Anievas, et.al. 2015; Henderson 2013; Barkawi and Laffey 2006) and social

scientific research, more broadly (Gabriel 2000).

In Chapter 4, I examined the concept of peace as an object of study in Geography and

the emergent subfield of peace geographies (McConnell, et.al. 2014; Kobayashi 2009; Flint 2005).

I explored key trends and ranges of approaches in understanding peace, specifically as a

relational process (Dalby 2014; Woon 2013; Koopman 2011; Williams 2011; Megoran 2010). I also

highlighted an assertion among geographers over the importance of peace as an intellectual

topic of geographic inquiry, building upon decades of advocacy toward a 'pro-peace' research

agenda in Geography (Pepper and Jenkins 1983; Wisner 1986; O'Loughlin and Heske 1991; Williams and McConnell 2011; Tyner and Inwood 2011; Sheppard 2013) and transforming the discipline toward a "science of peace" rather than of war (Mamadouh 2005). I then integrated the emergent subfield of Geographies of Peace with the 'spatial turn' in critical interdisciplinary peace literature to underscore the growing recognition of researchers on the role of geography in the emergence of peace, as well as the spatial dimensions of peace. Focusing on the spatial practices of the indigenous community of Sagada in maintaining the peace zone through constant refusal of the processes of insurgency and counterinsurgency, I argued that peace is a form of spatial power that the indigenous community mobilizes in carving out alternative geopolitical spaces beyond the purview of state and rebels, disrupting violence, and protecting their lives during war.

Overall, this dissertation focused on two main possibilities. First, it is concerned with spatial alternatives that challenge, disrupt, and transform the spatial logics of violence and war implemented by competing structures of power of state and non-state armed actors, especially as they intersect around issues of the overlapping geographies of war and peace, critical geopolitics, insurgency and counterinsurgency, and indigenous autonomy. Second, it is concerned with alternative approaches to studying peace. Of concern are the emergent shifts in critical interdisciplinary peace research that re-orient the studies of peace toward 'local' peacebuilding, attention to space and place, and adopting ethnographic methods of participant observation to better understand local actors and processes. I have argued that attending to 'community-led', rather than 'local', peace practices reveal the quotidian practices of civilian communities that serve as a productive basis for analyzing and understanding micro, grassroots, or local dynamic and consequences of peacebuilding processes. Moving from a

dominant view of peace as a state-sponsored and expert-led project, I have argued that peace is also produced through community-led mechanisms that seek to mitigate the impact of state-sponsored war or violence from non-state armed groups. My findings also revealed that community-led peace practices often are more durable and effective in protecting civilian lives during war than the intermittent and inconclusive state-centric peace processes.

Further, the re-framing of peace as insurgent peace signals the importance of understanding the complex processes of community-led peacebuilding beyond the framework of 'neutrality' or 'resistance'. Through the concept of insurgent peace that emerged from my investigation of the community-led peace zone in Sagada, I argued that peace is both disruptive and transformative. On the one hand, insurgent peace captures the ways in which peripheral communities disrupt the spatial logics of war. On the other hand, insurgent peace also gestures toward the transformation of political relationships between peripheral communities and structures of dominant power. In this formulation, I also argued that peace can be viewed as a form of spatial power that re-configures the geopolitics of war and peace in terms of the rights and protections of peripheral communities marginalized by violence.

I believe that this approach to peace opens up a number of relevant avenues for research in Geography, as well as in the field of interdisciplinary peace studies, to better understand 'what' peace is, but also the 'how' and 'where' of peace. These avenues for research include understanding the simultaneous interplay of the multiple spatialities mobilized in community-led peace practices and the ways in which this approach can be applied to examining alternative geopolitical and spatial practices of proving protection to vulnerable populations. Specifically, the question around sanctuary as both a physical space and spatial process could benefit from this approach of understanding the mechanisms of maintaining

community-led sanctuaries that also disrupt state-sponsored violence and gesture upon future

geopolitical relationships between the state and undocumented immigrants. Also relevant is

the need for further inquiries on insurgent peace as a form of spatial power that can re-set our

understandings of peace as not merely absence of violence but as collective capacities of

peripheral communities in reconfiguring spaces and political hierarchies toward the

possibilities of peaceful futures.

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