

Editors' notes

As a social relational and cultural category, probing the meanings of well-being necessitates attending to its articulations in individual and collective experience. The articles in this volume elaborate ethnographically nuanced contexts within which one should understand the articulations of well-being. All of them key into the “meaning-making” processes that animate agentic actions and interactions in characteristic social, cultural, and ecological formations.

To elaborate: Guazon calls attention to the politics of care-giving and care-receiving among Filipino Catholic migrants in Brussels, Belgium and shows how such practices are entangled with (re)interpretations of Catholic tenets of caring for the poor and reward and retribution, with cultural values of *utang-na-loob* (debt of gratitude) expressed in patron-client relationship, and state regulations on residency. In short, Guazon locates understandings of well-being in a changing sociomoral order affecting diasporic Filipinos. In quite the same vein, Gonzales probes the well-being of three persons living with HIV in Cebu City by showing how each exercised their individual agencies in dealing with issues of stigmatization, demands of familial obligations, and the pursuits of personal sense of control and purpose through their involvement in an NGO created to look after the well-being of persons afflicted with HIV-AIDS. Cast in the context of a farming system in Ilocos, Tadeo sheds light on how Ilocano families continually orient themselves toward the “good life” in relation to environmental changes, farm locations, and volatile market forces. Baldonado describes the ways in which the Bagobo-Klatas struggle with the “ambiguities” in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act vis-a-vis their customary land laws as they negotiate their ancestral domain claims. Lastly, Oracion critiques the “one-size fits all” orientation of institutional interventions in environmental problems faced by households dwelling along the sections of Pagatban River in Negros Oriental. He calls attention to the excesses of such orientation in addressing the needs of demographically and socioeconomically diverse households in the area. Overall, the authors bring to bear context-specific understandings of well-being, thereby unsettling prevailing unitary and universalizing definitions often deployed in ameliorating the unbearable conditions faced by marginalized communities.

We trust that readers will value this issue, which additionally features field reports on the Agusanon Manobo from Bunawan, Agusan del Sur, and two brief items on Isabelo de los Reyes, the inspiration for nationwide activities held July 2013 in the launch of ‘Anthropology Day’ in the Philippines, coordinated by the UGAT.

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