

Preface to the Second Edition

Change is a constant in all communities. Leading figures age and pass from the scene, while newcomers enter with fresh hopes and ideas. New opportunities are perceived both within and beyond the community, and old institutions are transformed or replaced. External forces, political, economic, religious, etc., can subtly or grossly alter patterns and rhythms of life in surprisingly short spans of time. Any adequate account of a community must therefore go beyond its immediate appearance and describe the interacting flows of individual and social change generated both internally, and by the larger society within which it is embedded. Unfortunately, our tools for dealing with such changes are still very primitive; we are much better at describing structures at particular points in time than the complex processes by which they evolve through time. And these inadequacies are often compounded by our simultaneously changing viewpoints, interests, and assumptions as observers. Nonetheless, anyone interested in social processes, the means by which individuals and groups adapt to, or alter their surroundings and relationships, must face these problems as well and as often as possible.

Thus we were frankly excited when the opportunity arose to spend three weeks in Estancia in October and November 1974, six-and-a-half years after completing our original 18 months field research in the town. It meant seeing old friends, and making some new ones, and catching up on the changes in their lives, and our town. The prospect was all the more intriguing because it seemed likely that both the rate and nature of change would have been affected by the imposition of Martial Law, two years earlier, in September 1972. Enough time had passed for its impact to be felt, but it was not yet ancient history. And indeed the changes were great, but they were also complex and difficult to unravel. Three weeks were obviously insufficient to explore them all, but we did as much as we could.

Given the changes that had occurred in the town, when the idea arose of reprinting this volume, aside from the need for clarifying aspects of the original text, a new chapter seemed necessary. In many important ways the

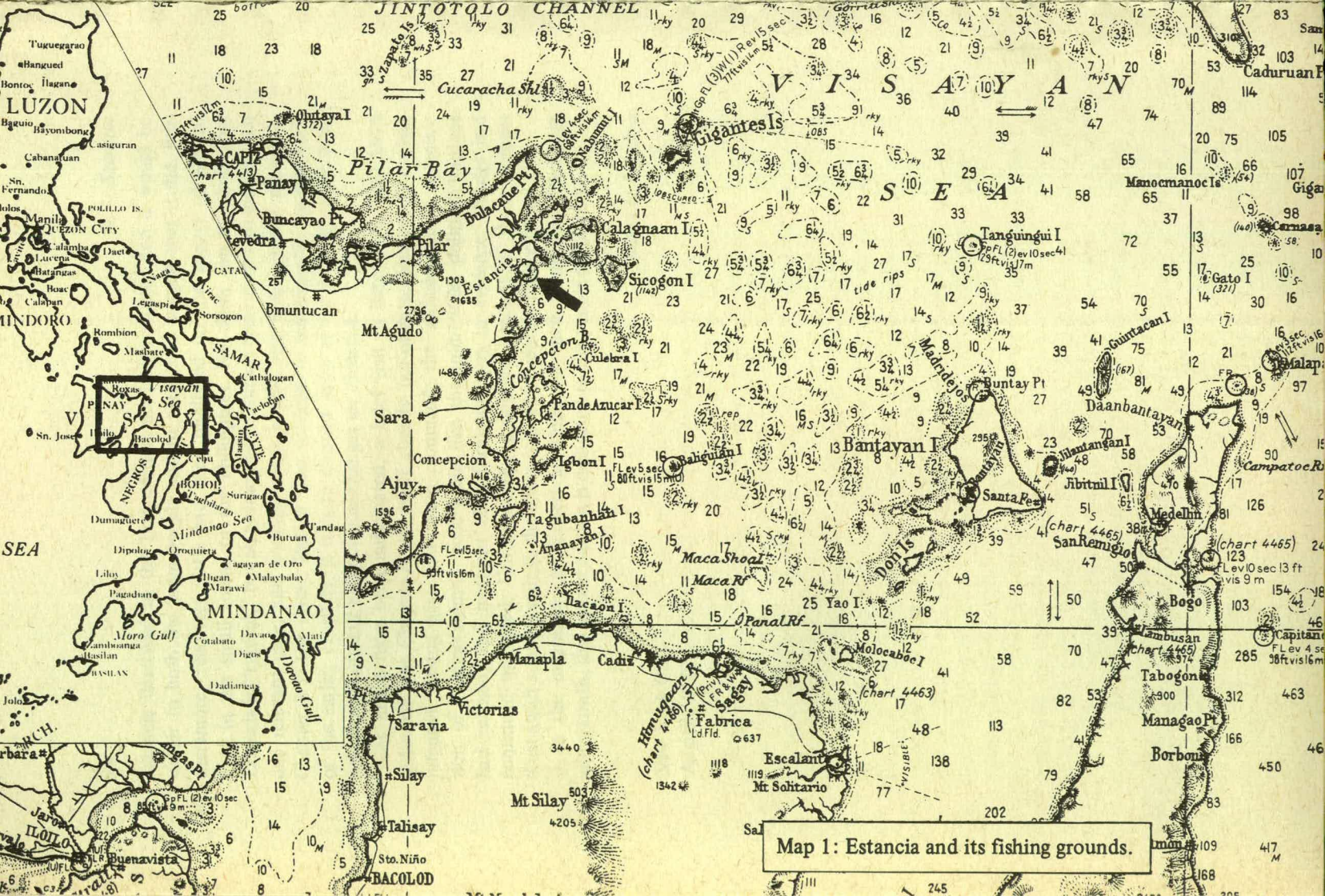
Estancia described in the first edition no longer existed and it would be unfair to both the townspeople and to readers to suggest that it did. Furthermore, relatively little had been published on the impact of Martial Law in the small towns of the Philippines. No claim can be made that Estancia is "typical," but an account of its impact there could provide at least one relevant case, and possibly some insight into more general processes. Chapter 8 is the result. Rather than attempt to mechanically up-date each of the earlier chapters, it tries to describe some of the more dramatic technological, economic and political changes we observed.

As might have been anticipated, a brief visit to Estancia in July 1979 indicated that Chapter 8 was itself already out-of-date. New, more capital-intensive fishing gear had taken command, the socioeconomic organization of fishing seemed once again like the mid-1960s, political tensions had relaxed, and incipient class formation was in evidence. Change had continued unabated. Unfortunately, a detailed account of those changes must await a longer visit to the town - - and an eventual third edition!

In the meantime, in deepest gratitude for their continuing friendship and warmth, this second edition is dedicated to the people of Estancia.

David L. Szanton

New York City
August, 1979



Map 1: Estancia and its fishing grounds.