

CONCENTRATION OF LANDHOLDINGS AND RURAL POVERTY IN WESTERN VISAYAS, 1970-71

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This study is concerned with investigating the structural context of rural poverty. Using 1970-71 census data from a sample of rural agricultural municipalities in Western Visayas, it examines the extent to which the concentration of landholdings in large agricultural estates is related to five poverty indicators. Consistently positive correlations between landholding concentration and levels of poverty were found through the use of multiple correlation analysis, even when associated factors such as adult schooling levels, distance from a chartered city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation were held constant. It is concluded that current agrarian reform efforts which exempt large estates and specialized crops may be bypassing the poverty problem, perhaps because they do not allow for the betterment of rural wage-earners. Instead of generating their expected prosperity, large export-oriented plantations may be in fact accelerating the underdevelopment of the masses.

Introduction

Massive poverty is one of the most serious problems of the Third World. This ubiquitous and age-old social phenomenon forms part of the reality which the poor nations have to confront in working out their development.

Explanations as to the cause of poverty range from the mythical view that "it is the will of God," to the simplistic rationalization that "resources are inadequate," from the naive idea that "poor people are lazy," to the more critical emphasis upon "unjust social structures." Whatever its causes, poverty is a grim reality which takes on particular significance in a world which boasts of the technological expertise to produce food and create wealth.

Poverty tends to be a cycle which breeds itself (Espiritu 1980: 11). Viewed sociologically, the insufficiency of material goods and services is "rooted deeply in institutional frameworks, particularly in the distribution of economic and political power within the system" (League for Economic Assistance and Development 1973:1). Thus, poverty has a structural context — "those relatively stable, broad, and enduring patterns of social organization . . . into which

individuals are born and over which, as individuals, they have little control" (Young, Freebairn and Snipper 1979:671) — which provides the background, environment or setting upon which poverty occurs. The vertical orientation of the social, economic and political structures enables the few to get the benefits and reserves the hardships and burdens to the great majority. Thus, the masses are effectively deprived of the possibilities to develop, their indispensable contributions to proven productive capacity notwithstanding (Houtart 1976:6; Butalid 1980:2).

The study aims at examining the relationship between one of the dominant patterns in the organization of rural society, that is, the unequal concentration of landholdings, and municipal poverty levels in rural areas of Western Visayas as of 1970-71. Specifically, this variable will be examined in terms of its relationship with certain poverty indicators, namely: out-of-school youths, non-ownership of a radio, light construction materials for housing, capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply and inadequate toilet facilities. The possibly compounding impact of the levels of adult schooling, distance from the nearest city, land

slope and sugarcane cultivation will also be controlled. The general hypothesis to be tested is that poverty levels will vary directly with the extent to which agricultural land in the municipality is concentrated disproportionately in large estates.

Review of Related Literature

Although there is a majority of small farms in the Philippines, the total land area is concentrated in a relatively smaller number of larger farms (Castillo 1979: 38). The "prevailing structure of property relations based on the monopoly of land and the social institutional arrangements that it nurtures" breeds poverty (Esguerra 1980:18-19), and is connected with the "historically valid problem of landlessness" (Espiritu 1980:1). Monopoly of land forces the large majority of the farmers to till small parcels of land. These small parcels are progressively fragmented into economically unviable sizes (World Bank 1980:62; Ledesma 1982:71). Furthermore, the monopoly of land is linked to the presence of a large mass of landless agricultural workers, "the poorest of the poor," who work in agriculture but without ownership or legal rights to land. This peasant subclass, deprived of adequate access to land and subject to numerous factors beyond its control, subsists as "the truly marginal group in rural society," notwithstanding its significant contribution to production (Ledesma 1982:176). Thus, Eckholm (1979:8-14) claims that poverty is a costly human price paid for by the majority of the poor in a society whereby ownership of land is an exclusive reserve of the few.

However, an argument can be made that the concentration of farmland in a few large holdings could result in decreased levels of poverty. For one thing, modern farm machineries may be uneconomical to small- and medium-sized farms; their use on large farms could raise productivity and therefore, farm income. For another, increased farm size will mean a larger number of workers per

farm, thus encouraging occupational specialization which brings about better remuneration and benefits for the workers (Bertrand 1958:406). Recently, Hackenberg (1980:403-404) has asserted that a similar process as has occurred in the U.S. could also occur within Philippine agriculture, arguing that the expansion of plantation-type agriculture would eventually benefit the whole country including the agricultural labor sector.

At present, at least some officials within the present administration appear impressed with the hypothetical advantages of large-scale, export-oriented agricultural ventures. Through the auspices of the National Development Company (NDC), the government is in fact now encouraging plantation-type farms in the hope that these will increase Philippine agricultural exports and alleviate balance of payments problems. Indeed, Roberto Ongpin, Chairman of the board of the NDC has argued that very large holdings will be needed for these ventures since "one thousand hectares couldn't be (economically) viable for a plantation" (cited in Tadem 1980a:1).

However, the prosperity expected out of these agricultural industries does not seem in actual fact to "trickle down" substantially to the masses. Thus, Carner (1980:16) avers that "sugar, coconut, banana and coffee export expansion favors plantation agriculture and ties up substantial land assets in the hands of the few to the detriment of the landless agricultural workers who receive a small share of the returns while suffering prolonged unemployment during periods of over-supply and periodically depressed prices." Even though workers are employed in highly profitable agribusiness corporations, they may not have been largely benefiting in terms of better wages (Espiritu 1980:5). Studies on pineapple (Cullen 1976:300-303), banana (Rivera 1980), rice and corn (Ofreneo 1980), the corporate farming program (Tadem 1980b) and the export-oriented plantation corporations in general (Costello 1981a), show

that these corporations pose effective competition to small farmers, tenants and landless rural agricultural workers in the acquisition and control of lands. Evidently, large estates planted to export crops as a strategy for development accelerate the underdevelopment of the masses.

In a more general sense, the present study represents an empirical test of two contrasting theories about the causes of rural poverty. These might be termed the "individualistic" and "structural" perspectives. Abad and Eviota's (1982:ii) review of Philippine poverty studies has summarized the "individualistic" perspective as looking at

poverty as a pathological condition brought about by anti-development values, attitudes and life-styles of the poor. The poor . . . are, in effect, responsible for their own condition: they are resistant to change and their refusal to improve themselves, or to modernize, is at the cost of deteriorating levels of living. A 'culture of poverty' inevitably develops which perpetuates poverty unto succeeding generations.

Early research into the problem of poverty in the Philippines was often carried out within the framework of the "individualistic" paradigm (e.g. Lapuz 1967; Pelaez 1967). Of late, however, this viewpoint has been less frequently espoused by Philippine social scientists, though it may still be commonly found among journalists, government administrators and members of the general public.

Opposed to the above viewpoint is a variety of sociological theories of poverty, all of which tend to stress the linkages between certain aspects of social structure and Third World poverty. These would include "modernization" or "developmentalist" schools of thought, "community participation" proposals and "dependency" theory. The present study's concern with the relationship between the concentration of agricultural landholdings and rural poverty brings it closest to testing the third of these three perspectives.

According to this theory, poverty is best viewed as:

the outgrowth of a political economy which has consistently (and throughout its history) concentrated the ownership of productive assets and resources in the hands of a small elite at the expense of the large masses of people. The development process is seen as intrinsically exploitative because the main mechanisms for the perpetuation of such a system are the appropriation of the labor of large numbers of people and the extraction of productive resources for the profit of the elite . . . Dependence is articulated in the dominant demands of capitalist production: the capitalist penetration of the countryside, the appropriation of cheap labor and the large-scale expropriation of the country's natural resources by multi-nationals. All these demands aggravate the impoverishment of the majority population (Abad and Eviota 1982-iii-iv).

In the present context, the "individualistic" perspective would forecast generally weak and inconsistent relationships between landholding concentration and the five poverty indicators. In contrast, "dependency" theory predicts that these variables should be consistently and positively associated with one another.

Four control variables have been used in the present study, namely, adult schooling, distance from the nearest city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation.

Income is highly dependent on schooling. Higher incidence of poverty could be expected among people with low or no education since "education has the highest effect on income" (Castillo 1979:190). The World Bank (1980:30) has reported higher poverty levels among households in the Philippines headed by a person with low educational attainment. Similarly, Gartrell (1981:780) found a strong positive correlation (.51) between levels of adult literacy and average household income among 84 rural communities in India.

Distance from an urban center appears to

have some influence upon levels of poverty. Towns nearer to an urban center are more likely able to benefit from infrastructural and other developments emanating from the city. Smith (1973: 111) found that proximity to Manila or an urban center has direct effect on socio-economic status. Gartrell (1981: 780) found a negative correlation between distance from an urban center and average household income in rural India, a finding which was also obtained for 27 rural municipalities in Northern Mindanao (Costello 1982: Table 1). Farmers in areas far from the city would tend to have lower farm-gate prices for their products (Castillo 1979: 67).

Upland areas are best identified with "difficult agricultural conditions" (World Bank 1980: 74). Land within 0-18 percent slope is "deemed fit for agriculture" (Luning 1981: 122). In contrast, "the less fertile and eroded upland soils result to lower margins of productivity" (Castillo 1979: 43).

Sugarcane cultivation has been "reputed to perpetuate a system of unequally distributed wealth and income" (Lynch 1970: 1) and it holds the singular distinction of having workers who have the least remunerative work and those with the least opportunities for supplementary income (Carner 1980: 4-5; cf. also Jesena 1969: 4-11; Regalado and Franco 1973: 285-286; and Castillo 1979: 54). The almost total commitment of land to sugarcane cultivation is held by Yengoyan (1974: 67-68) as mainly responsible for the existence of massive poverty in Negros Occidental. The sugar industry requires the active participation of the laboring masses, but its benefits have been largely appropriated by the *hacenderos* (Larkin 1978: xii-xxi).

By controlling these factors which have been found to have influences on levels of living, we can determine the independent impact of large landholdings on poverty. Sugarcane cultivation, in particular, being largely carried out in large farms (Castillo 1979: 38), should serve as a proxy for other

types of export crops which are similarly cultivated in large estates.

Five indicators have been used in this study, namely, out-of-school youths, non-ownership of a radio, light construction materials for housing, capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply and inadequate toilet facilities.

Education is an important determinant of man's social and economic development. Education is "an investment in human capital" (Schultz 1961). But parents who are poor in the first place have largely a forlorn hope in this regard. Castillo (1979: 41) notes that the highest incidence of poverty appears among farm and related workers who are the least educated of all occupational groups. Thus, the poverty of the parents negates their hope of having their children get educated, and blocks the youth's access to this perceived means of social mobility (Castillo 1979: 175 and 192; Costello and Palabrica-Costello 1980). In this context, it is noteworthy that Western Visayas¹ is one of the three regions in the country with the highest percentage of out-of-school youths (Castillo 1979: 176).

Ownership of a radio should serve as a convenient indicator of a rural family's ability to spare part of their income for entertainment purposes. A household without a radio may not be able to participate adequately in this aspect of the modern system of mass media through which ideas, techniques and information are diffused.

Adequate housing, safe water supply and decent toilet facilities are basic human needs. Ordinarily, a family of means would not overlook these basics for well-being. Variations in these indicators may be assumed to reflect differences in income levels. Social scientists usually include these variables along with education and radio, in their studies on the levels of living (e.g., Smith 1973). Various studies have also shown poorer groups in the Philippines to have lesser access to durable housing (Pahilanga-De Los Reyes and Lynch

1972: 14) and to safe and convenient sources of water supply (Costello 1981b).

Data and Methods

The study utilized available public records. Data on large landholdings and sugarcane cultivation were taken from the 1971 Philippine Census of Agriculture (NCSO 1974a). Data on levels of adult schooling and the poverty indicators were taken from the 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing (NCSO 1974b). Data on land slope categories were obtained from the National Economic and Development Authority, Region VI, Iloilo City. Data on distances to the nearest city were taken from maps which are used by government offices in the region, as available from the Firmeza Engineering Enterprises, Iloilo City.²

Data on farm size, sugarcane cultivation, land slope, distance, adult schooling and out-of-school youths were reckoned with for each whole municipality. Data on the other four poverty indicators were those for rural areas in the municipality as classified in the census reports. No data on school enrolments specific for rural areas were available from the census tabulations.

Sampling proceeded in the following manner. First, using the final report by province of the 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing (NCSO 1974b), a list was made up of all municipalities and cities in the provinces of Antique, Aklan, Capiz, Negros Occidental and Iloilo. These five provinces comprise the Western Visayas. Since the major purpose of the paper was to examine the correlates of agricultural conditions with rural poverty indicators, it was decided to eliminate from the sampling frame all towns in which agriculture was not the dominant industry. Municipalities which did not have at least 60 percent of their total male labor force employed in agriculture were thus taken out.³ Chartered cities were automatically eliminated from the sampling

frame. Overall, eight cities and sixteen of the 122 municipalities in the region were excluded. From the final sampling frame consisting of 106 municipalities, a simple random sample of sixty municipalities was then drawn by the use of a table of random numbers. This constituted 56.6 percent of the universe. The municipalities thus chosen comprised the units of analysis for the study.

Operational definitions for the variables analyzed in this study were, as follows: "landholding concentration" (X_1) was measured in terms of the percent of all farmland found in farms of 10 or more hectares.⁴ "Adult schooling" (T_1) refers to the percent of the population 25 years old and over who have completed at least Grade VI.⁵ "Distance" (T_2) was measured in kilometers via the shortest possible road network from the municipal poblacion to the nearest city.⁶ "Land slope" (T_3) refers to the percent of land area in the municipality which falls into the three lowest categories: A, B, and C as classified by the Bureau of Lands (i.e., into nonsloping or flat land). These categories comprise 0-18 percent land slope.⁷ "Sugarcane cultivation" (T_4) refers to the percent of farmland (effective crop area) planted to sugarcane.⁸

The poverty indicators as operationally defined were as follows: "Out-of-school youths" (Y_1) was measured in terms of the percent of all persons aged 8-13 years, in both urban and rural areas of the municipality, who were not attending school.⁹ "Without radio" (Y_2) refers to the percent of households in the rural areas of the municipality without a radio.¹⁰ "Light housing materials" (Y_3) refers to the percent of dwelling/residential buildings in the rural areas of the municipality with either bamboo or nipa as construction material of the wall, and with cogon or nipa as construction material for the roof.¹¹ "Capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply" (Y_4) was measured in terms of the percent of households in occupied dwelling units in the rural areas of the municipality

obtaining their water from an open well, spring, lake, river and stream, etc.¹² "Poor toilet facilities" (Y_5) was measured in terms of the percent of households in the rural areas of the municipality using open pit, or public toilet or with no toilet facilities at all.¹³ Further details on the measurement of the study's variables are to be found in Boglosa (1982).

Sample and non-sample municipalities in the sampling frame were compared in terms of their mean scores on landholding concentration, adult schooling, distance, land slope, sugarcane cultivation and out-of-school youths. In each case, the mean scores for the variables are close, indicating that the sample is quite typical of the universe. Hence, the study has a high degree of external validity.

Table 1 presents bivariate correlation coefficients between the five poverty indicators. In 9 of 10 comparisons the indicators were found to be positively correlated, thus indicating that each variable may be reflecting the same underlying construct (i.e., rural poverty). Three correlations involving Y_5 (poor toilet facilities) are statistically significant, a finding which suggests that this indicator is particularly reliable.

As Table 1 shows, poverty was extensive in Western Visayas. On the average, 22.9 percent of the youths aged 8-13 years were not in school. Of the rural households: 63.2 percent had no radio, 71.3 percent had poor sources of water supply, 76.4 percent had poor or no toilet facilities, and 71.5 percent lived in dwelling units made of light construction materials.

Table 1. *Zero-order correlations, means and standard deviations for five poverty indicators: Sixty municipalities in Western Visayas, 1970*

Poverty Indicators		Y_1	Y_2	Y_3	Y_4	Y_5
Out-of-school youths	(Y_1)	—	.20	.09	.25	.30*
Without radio	(Y_2)		—	.17	-.24	.35**
Light housing materials	(Y_3)			—	.06	.26*
Capital-free water supply	(Y_4)				—	.17
Poor toilet facilities	(Y_5)					—
Mean		22.9	63.2	71.5	71.3	76.4
Standard Deviation		8.2	11.0	15.5	19.1	12.6

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

Findings

Since the major purpose of this study has been to examine the relationship between the concentration of landholdings and levels of

poverty with the controls being instituted for the compounding influence of adult schooling, distance, land slope and sugarcane cultivation, it was necessary to examine their bivariate relationships before proceeding to multivariate

correlation analysis. In both cases, tests of statistical significance were carried out in order to assess the strength of the relationships.

As shown in Table 2, the need to control for such factors as adult schooling, distance from a city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation when investigating the independent impact of landholding concentration upon rural poverty is apparent. In a number of cases, these variables are strongly correlated, either with one another, with the poverty indicators, or with the hypothesized independent variable, thus indicating the possibility of spurious bivariate correlations. In general, concentrated landholdings were more typically found in municipalities in which (a) levels of adult schooling were higher than average, (b) sugarcane planting was

widespread, (c) farmlands were nonsloping, and (d) distances to the nearest city were not large. Since most of these factors are in turn associated negatively with poverty levels, it is perhaps to be expected that municipalities dominated by high proportion of large farms will not rank particularly high on the five poverty indicators, at least as far as the bivariate correlations are concerned. To some extent this is the case, as shown by the fact that municipalities with more concentrated landholdings tend to have smaller proportions of families reporting themselves as not owning a radio and fewer dwelling units built of light housing materials. On the other three poverty indicators, however, landholding concentration is associated positively with levels of poverty. All of these comparisons are statistically significant.

Table 2. *Zero-order correlation coefficients between independent (X), control (T) and dependent (Y) variables, and means and standard deviations for the independent and control variables: Sixty municipalities in Western Visayas, 1970-71*

Variables		X_1	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_4
Landholding concentration	(X_1)	—				
Adult schooling	(T_1)	.12	—			
Distance	(T_2)	-.33	.31*	—		
Land slope	(T_3)	.27	.39**	-.59***	—	
Sugarcane cultivation	(T_4)	.74	.20	-.38**	.25	—
Out-of-school youths	(Y_1)	.36	.44***	.11	-.30*	.23
Without radio	(Y_2)	-.23	.31*	.62***	-.60***	-.34**
Light housing materials	(Y_3)	-.07	-.38**	.34**	-.16	-.26*
Capital-free water supply	(Y_4)	.34	-.22	-.42***	.18	.06
Poor toilet facilities	(Y_5)	.32	-.43***	.24	-.26*	.09
Mean		32.2	31.7	66.3	69.5	15.4
Standard Deviation		24.3	6.6	42.4	24.4	17.5

*** $p < .001$

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

As Table 2 also shows, concentration of landholdings is an important aspect of the Western Visayas. On the average, 32.2 percent of each municipality's total farmland is occupied by large farms. In comparison, only 5 percent of the total number of farms in the region were found to fall into the "large farms" category. Thus, about one out of every twenty farmers controls nearly a third of the

region's farmland.

Table 3 shows the fourth-order partial correlation coefficients indicating the impact of landholding concentration on poverty levels when adult schooling, distance from the nearest city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation were controlled.

Table 3. *Fourth-order partial correlation coefficients indicating the impact of landholding concentration on each of the poverty indicators when adult schooling, distance from the nearest city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation were held constant: Sixty municipalities in Western Visayas, 1970-71*

<i>Poverty Indicators</i>		<i>Landholding Concentration (Y_1)</i>
Out-of-school youths	(Y_1)	.37*
Without radio	(Y_2)	.14
Light housing materials	(Y_3)	.19
Capital-free water supply	(Y_4)	.47**
Poor toilet facilities	(Y_5)	.45**

**p < .001

*p < .01

As shown earlier, the zero-order correlation coefficient between landholding concentration and out-of-school youths is .36, which is significant at the .01 level. In comparison, the partial correlation coefficient is .37, which is also significant at .01. The coefficient of determination (r^2) for this single variable is .14, indicating that the landholding concentration variable accounted for 14 percent of the variance in levels of out-of-school youths. Thus, even with adult schooling, distance, land slope and sugarcane planting having been controlled, the concentration of farmland into few holdings was clearly correlated positively with out-of-school youths. These youths were not attending school even though by virtue of their ages, these people should have been attending at least the elementary grades. Even

though our government provides free elementary education, it seems that poverty is so endemic in areas where only a few own vast tracts of land, that parents have had to pull out their children from school earlier than usual, or did not send them to school at all. It is a normal expectation and an ardent desire of parents to have their children get educated, but if life is reduced to plain physical survival, even elementary education becomes dispensable.

The zero-order correlation coefficient between large farms and non-ownership of a radio was found to be -.23. This indicates that large farms were associated with *more* ownership of a radio. The multivariate analysis, however, yielded a correlation coefficient of .14. This shows that when the

controls were introduced, the gain of large farms in terms of radio ownership disappeared. Evidently, in areas where large farms predominated, there was a higher (though non-statistically significant) incidence of non-ownership of a radio.

A similar trend was clear regarding houses made of light construction materials. The partial correlation coefficient between landholding concentration and this variable is .19, a finding which reversed the direction of the zero-order correlation coefficient (-.07). Thus, landholding concentration was actually correlated with poverty in terms of housing, when the controls were taken into account.

As shown by the partial correlation coefficient, landholding concentration still remained positively associated with the use of capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply. The partial correlation coefficient in this case is .47, which is significant at the .001 level. Thus, the marginal situation of the many in areas where access to the land has been monopolized by the few is also reflected in terms of their inability to secure safe and convenient sources of water.

There is a positive zero-order correlation coefficient between landholding concentration and poor toilet facilities, which is significant at the .05 level. The correlation became even stronger (.45, $p < .001$) in the multiple correlation analysis. The coefficient of determination for this variable is .20.

Thus, in terms of all the five indicators used in this study, the concentration of landholdings in a few large farms in a municipality seems to be rather closely associated with poverty. The supposedly high productivity of large farms must have added to the prosperity of their owners, but has not redounded to the general populace.

Summary and Discussion

The study examined the impact of the concentration of landholdings on levels of

poverty in rural municipalities of the Western Visayas as of 1970-71. Data were taken from publicly available sources, mainly census reports. Landholding concentration was measured in terms of large farms (10 or more hectares). Levels of poverty were measured in terms of out-of-school youths, non-ownership of a radio, light construction materials for housing, capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply and poor toilet facilities. The extent of adult schooling, distance from the nearest city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation were introduced as control variables.

By means of multivariate correlation analysis, this study has demonstrated that the concentration of landholdings is directly related to rural poverty. Even when adult schooling, distance to the nearest city, land slope and sugarcane cultivation were held constant, greater poverty was found in municipalities with higher proportion of their agricultural land concentrated in large holdings. This was true for all five poverty indicators, with three of the five comparisons being statistically significant.

The concentration of land ownership among the few is one of the most decisive patterns in the agricultural scene which is directly related to levels of poverty. The reduced access of the majority to land aggravates their poverty. When the factors of production are in the control of the few, the ensuing relations of production discriminates against the many who are simply wage earners. Thus, some form of land reform does appear urgently needed, though one which concentrates exclusively upon redistributing land to share-tenants may be inadequate. Clearly, other rural workers may also suffer from an unequal system of land distribution. When ownership of land in a community is heavily concentrated among a few elite families, the masses are likely to be mired in poverty, especially the rural landless class, who are not covered by the agrarian reform program (Ledesma 1982: 122). Their situation

is likely to be especially problematic in such communities since there are fewer well-off farmers to whom they can offer their services. With only a few well-connected families bidding for their services, their exploitation is virtually assured.

Further, shifting the blame about poverty on factors such as ecological setting (upland areas, distance from a city) or lack of proper training among the rural masses eliminates the crucial issue of how land ownership or non-ownership affects the question of poverty. It is indeed a cruel paradox that the most poor are the very people whose lives are spent on creating wealth and producing food for the rich minority. The question becomes even more urgent considering the fact that the small number of large farms occupy a disproportionately large share of land area, particularly in places more fitted for agriculture. In this context, agricultural modernization in terms of better techniques of production may enhance productivity and enable landowners and corporations to amass profits, but is of little help to the poor masses. Thus, the present study indicates that, in addition to conventional "development" programs (agricultural education, irrigation, etc.) serious commitment to an effective program for the dispersion of ownership of land is sorely needed. At the very least, some way must be found by which rural wage earners may be adequately paid for their work. The present system of basing rewards almost entirely upon land ownership is bound to result in poverty for the masses insofar as so few own adequate parcels of land.

Large farms must be evaluated in terms of their bearing on the basic needs of the local people. Large farms planted to specialized crops for export may be generating profits for the corporations but may at the same time be depriving the immediate populace of the basic means to subsistence. Increased gross national product out of these export-oriented plantations does not necessarily mean development for the masses. The expected trickle of these large corporate farms will probably be even smaller or nonexistent in the case of transnational corporations which are allowed profit remittances abroad.

It is well-known that in the Philippines, large farms are relatively few in number but these, in fact, occupy a disproportionately big part of the total farm area and are usually planted to export crops such as sugarcane, coffee, rubber, pineapple, banana and the like (Castillo 1979: 38). The government is also encouraging in many ways the spread of export-oriented plantation corporations. The rationale for this "development" strategy lies in the ability of these export crops to generate earnings in foreign currency. Some evidence exists that this thrust has resulted in large expansion of export-oriented corporations during the past decade (e.g., Costello 1981a). Based on the results of this study, it is perhaps time to reassess these policies and trends. The supposed ability of large farms to raise rural incomes should not be merely assumed — indeed, intense cultivation of export crops in large farms owned by a few individuals, families or corporations could well be anti-development in nature.

Notes

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¹In Castillo (1979: 9), Western Visayas is designated as Region VII composed of the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Negros Occidental, Iloilo and Romblon. Currently, the region is designated as Region VI which does not include Romblon. This present study refers to Region VI composed of the first five provinces.

²It appears that there is a difference of one year since the 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing (NCSO 1974b) was done in May 1970, while the 1971 Philippine Census of Agriculture (NCSO 1974a) was done in April 1971. It may be recalled that the Census of Agriculture was originally scheduled to be done simultaneously with that of the Census of Population and Housing in 1970. But it was re-scheduled due to fiscal limitations. However, the data for crops in the 1971 Philippine Census of Agriculture were those related to crop year July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971. Hence, physical crop area, farm size, farm type and tenure of operators were reckoned within a time frame which corresponds closely to the 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing.

³Data on agricultural employment patterns for each municipality were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing. Final Report. Vol. 1. Report by Province (Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Negros Occidental and Iloilo). Manila: National Census and Statistics Office, 1974b, Part 1, Table 11-6.

⁴Data on landholding concentration (large farms) were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1971 Philippine Census of Agriculture. Final Report. Vol. 1. Report by Province (Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Negros Occidental and Iloilo). Manila: National Census and Statistics Office, 1974a, Table 5-B. This measure is even a conservative estimate of inequality in land distribution because some large landowners are likely to own two or more such farms in a municipality or in various municipalities. The census even lists farms of 5 or more hectares as already large. Thus, the degree of confidence on the results of the study regarding the impact of landholding concentration on poverty should be high.

⁵Data on adult schooling were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part I, Table 111-7. The few cases in which census respondents failed to state their level of educational attainment were subtracted out from the base population and were also not included in the numerator.

⁶Data on distance were taken from the official

road maps for the region (one for the Island of Panay, and one for the province of Negros Occidental) available from Firmeza Engineering Enterprises, Iloilo City. The said maps are used extensively in government offices in Western Visayas. The maps indicate the distance between the poblacions of all municipalities and all cities as long as they are located on the same island. Distance of island municipalities (one case in the sample) was determined by applying the road scale for the distance covered by the sea.

⁷Data on land slope were taken from the National Economic and Development Authority, Region VI. Land Slope Categories by City/Municipality, Iloilo City.

⁸Data on sugarcane cultivation were extracted from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1971 Philippine Census of Agriculture, *op. cit.*, Tables 18 and 5-B.

⁹Data on out-of-school youths were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part I, Table 111-9. This age range is meant to correspond to the six years enrolment required at the elementary grades. This is another conservative estimate since seven-year olds are excluded. In fact, inspection of the census data showed a much lower enrolment rate among seven-year olds in most rural municipalities. Moreover, the government provides free elementary education to all citizens.

¹⁰Data on radio non-ownership were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part II, Table 9.

¹¹Data on light housing materials were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part II, Table 2. The census report defines a dwelling unit as "a separate and independent place of abode intended for habitation, or one not intended for habitation but occupied as a living quarter by a household at the time of the census."

¹²Data on capital-free or less expensive sources of water supply were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part II, Table 13. "Others" refer to those sources which are not specifically categorized in the census reports.

¹³Data on poor toilet facilities were taken from the National Census and Statistics Office. 1970 Philippine Census of Population and Housing, *op. cit.*, Part II, Table 15.

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SCIENTIFIC MEETING NOTICES

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THE 9th CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HISTORIANS IN ASIA (IAHA) will be held at the Philippine Social Science Center, Quezon City, on November 21-25, 1983. The panel discussions will be guided according to the following sections:

- Section One: Recent Trends in Philippine Historiography
- Section Two: Major Themes of Study in Asian History
- Section Three: Problems of Methodology in the Study of Asian History
- Section Four: Special Topics in Asian History

For inquiries regarding the academic portion of the conference, please write:

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