



## Original research article

# Indigenous environmental defenders and the legacy of Macli-ing Dulag: Anti-dam dissent, assassinations, and protests in the making of Philippine energyscape

Laurence L. Delina

Division of Environment and Sustainability, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong



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## ABSTRACT

Globally, Indigenous Peoples' dissent against unjust state and corporate incursions in their lands is being suppressed. States and corporations use penal laws, anti-terrorist legislation, and emergency powers to justify the detention of activists, who are subject to intimidation, human rights violations, or, at worst, extrajudicial killings. In 2019, the Philippines was named the most murderous country for environmental defenders; yet the literature about Indigenous Peoples' dissent in the country, where militarization of ancestral domains has been a continuing state project, remains scant—in contrast to extensive academic attention in other places particularly in the Americas. This paper asks how, when and where Philippine Indigenous Peoples' dissent started to expand—what narratives of mobilizations did history produce, and how do these narratives travel across space-time. Using multi-methods research and focusing on the Philippine Cordillera, where mega-hydropower projects have been extensively proposed as a key mode for energy transition, yet are widely opposed by uncolonized peoples, this paper describes how Macli-ing Dulag's assassination, the Ifugao cultural performances, and networked mobilization during the second half of 1970s up to the early 1980s are becoming relevant in present-day dissent against large-hydro projects.

## 1. Introduction

In the (Ifugao) culture, when you are buried in a coffin, you are buried with a blanket, an Ifugao blanket. It is called the *gamung*. The military sent (me) an image of the *gamung* with a poem...*Rain May, June Gloom, No Sky July*...(meaning), your life will be gloomy and then by July there will be “no sky”...we took that threat seriously.

—Brandon Lee, November 2017.

On 6 August 2019, Brandon Lee, an American citizen living and working in the Philippines and a human rights advocate with the Ifugao Peasants Movement (IPM) who has been tagged by the Philippine military as a supporter of the communist rebels, was severely wounded in an attempted assassination in front of his house in Lagawe, Ifugao province [1,2]. More than a year earlier, Ricardo Mayumi, an Indigenous Peoples' leader in Tinoc, another Ifugao municipality, and known for his stance against destructive energy projects in Ifugao Rivers, was killed by suspected state military agents on 2 March 2018 [3]. William Bugatti, an indigenous Tawali and whom Lee replaced at IPM, was extrajudicially killed on 25 March 2014 after he was “red-tagged” (accused as a member and supporter of the Communist Party of

the Philippines (CPP) and its armed forces, the New Peoples' Army (NPA)) [4].

The corpus on the suppression of Indigenous Peoples' struggles against unjust incursions in Indigenous Peoples' lands and their resources by the state and corporations all over the world is thick. In Latin America, most especially, Indigenous Peoples' opposition to large-scale development projects has received extensive academic attention (e.g., [5–7])—but not so much in countries such as the Philippines. Often, this kind of dissent has been framed not only as indigenous but also as ecological and anti-capitalism [8], and, in some instances, as opposition to new forms of colonization or invasion [9]. These local—and, at the same time, global—injustices reflect the colonial histories of rich and extractive countries that continue to disproportionately extract resources located on or under Indigenous Peoples' lands. Dissent arises from an unequal political economy, where these extracted raw materials and other products—oil and minerals, but also agro-products such as timber—are sold at prices that do not compensate for local and global externalities [8]. Within a variety of these large-scale projects, those related to dams are a major sector where Indigenous Peoples' mobilizations are often violently crushed [10]. While hydropower dams are not traditionally classified as extractive projects, they are often placed side-by-side with extractive industries (e.g. [11]).

E-mail address: [LLD@ust.hk](mailto:LLD@ust.hk).

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Indigenous Peoples have been using legal mechanisms, such as the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), to reject extractivist project proposals (such as in Guatemala, see [12]). Some of these FPIC-related tactics led to public engagement with varying degrees of success. In Costa Rica, where hydropower has been central in energy generation, Indigenous Peoples, alongside the civil society, successfully opposed mega-hydro projects in Pacuare and Savegre in 2015, while constantly disrupting the operations of the existing 650-MW Diquis powerplant using FPIC-provided legal avenues [13]. The Indigenous Peoples' resistance against dams in the Chilean Patagonia (2006–2014) was also successful in using tactics that focused on resisting the approval of a hydro-company's environmental impact report [14]. While these examples provide cases of "successful" indigenous resistance, often, they are (fortunate) exceptions than the rule (e.g. the ongoing construction of hydroelectric dams in the Brazilian Amazon, despite efforts to stop them in the 1980s, see [15]).

To date, many states continue to suppress Indigenous Peoples' dissent using penal laws and anti-terrorist legislations, with many even resorting to state of emergency declarations. These tactics would justify the detention of activists, who were then subjected to intimidation, human rights violations, and, in worst cases, extrajudicial killings [16,17]. A key contemporary example is the case of the Honduran environmental defender Berta Cáceres, a Lenca Indigenous Person, who, for years, was harassed and arrested before she was finally assassinated on 3 March 2016 [5,18]. The Cáceres' case showed how agents of state and capital would collude to harass and murder activists<sup>1</sup> [6,7]. Interestingly, Berta Cáceres had scribbled her message of solidarity to environmental defenders in the Philippine Cordillera (See Fig. 1).

Berta Cáceres' message to the Ifugao people proved prescient. In 2019, the Global Witness, an international nongovernmental organization working on the nexus of natural resource exploitation, conflict, and human rights abuses worldwide, named the Philippines the most murderous country for environmental defenders: 30 people were killed defending their land and environment in 2018, following 48 murders in 2017 [10]. Notably, these numbers only pertain to Global Witness' database of publicly reported assassinations. Nevertheless, little is known in the scholarly literature about how intimidation, relative to resource extraction and military encroachment on Indigenous Peoples' lands in the Philippines, has been a continuing state project. This paper fills this gap, documenting how Indigenous Peoples' dissent expanded from the second half of 1970s to the early 1980s, at the time when Macli-ing Dulag, an Indigenous Peoples' leader, was assassinated for taking part in an anti-dam struggle which then became a key turning point for the international recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights and the institutionalization of the FPIC. As various Philippine governments—from Ferdinand Marcos' to Rodrigo Duterte's—ramped up their campaigns to suppress environmental defense, this paper argues that Macli-ing's martyrdom has become more relevant in informing present-day narratives of dissent against large-scale hydropower projects in Cordillera and beyond. By so doing, this paper addresses a significant gap in the literature on the narratives of dissent produced by uncolonized peoples<sup>2</sup> especially in understudied non-American contexts.

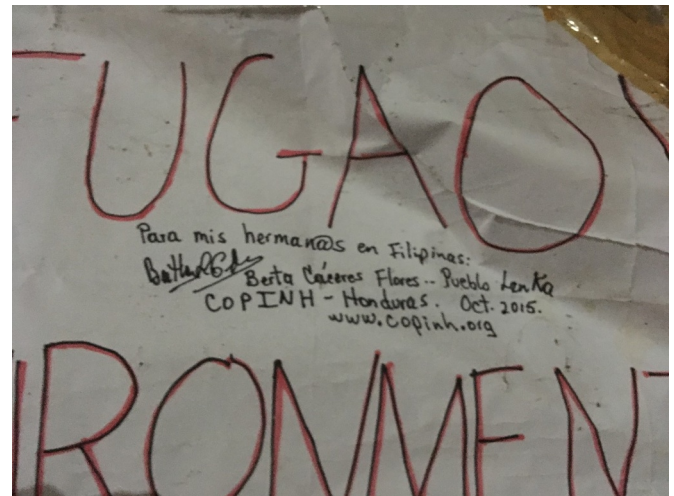


Fig. 1. Berta Cáceres message of solidarity to the Ifugao peoples. Photographed by the author., November 2017.

## 2. Data and methods

Primary data for this paper was sourced from multiple site visits, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and diary. Fieldwork for the study was conducted between July 2017 and September 2018 in the Philippine province of Ifugao and in the capital, Manila. Study informants were selected using the snowball sampling method and were approached according to their availability. For this paper, interview data from four key informants were used (see Appendix A for their description). Oral informed consents were sought in accordance with the recommendations of the Internal Review Board of Boston University, which also stated that this project is not human subjects research (Protocol No. 4103X on 29 April 2016, and Protocol No. 4696X on 12 December 2017). Interviews, on average, lasted 40 min, with some extending up to 1.5 h. The interview was conducted using key themes as an interview guide (see Appendix B). The discussion revolved around topics including energy resources and systems present in the sites; the key actors involved; and peoples' interactions with and perceptions about energy systems, energy issues, and energy actors. At the end of the interviews, respondents were asked to name other potential informants.

Secondary sources also provide key data. These include: (1) documents gathered during site visits (either asked from informants or provided by informants themselves); (2) pertinent websites of public agencies, NGOs and energy companies operating in the sites; and (3) news accounts from Philippine news providers and LexisNexis' "Nexis Uni," which features more than 15,000 news, business and legal sources.

## 3. Concepts

This paper uses the concept of *energyscape*, which, in this context, encompasses not only the energy technologies, infrastructure and systems but also the structural arrangements and institutions that make up an entire ecology of what can be called an energy sociotechnical system. In this paper, this energyscape refers primarily to hydropower sociotechnical complexes. An energyscape highlights both energy systems as technological and material objects that have been supporting human societies, and the political ideologies, social values and economic patterns that animate these systems.

In many ways, an energyscape is similar to Frank Geels' [19] description of a "sociotechnical landscape" in his Multi-Level Perspective concept. A sociotechnical landscape refers to the broader context that influences the dynamics of systems. According to Geels, this

<sup>1</sup> Agua Zarca Dam, Cáceres' last object of dissent, is a joint project by the Honduran company Desarrollos Energeticos SA (DESA) and Chinese state-owned SinoHydro (which pulled out because of the Cáceres-led protests). This project is intricately connected with the powerful Atala Zablah family, the military, and the Honduran Government [6, 7]. DESA's executive vice president, David Castillo Mejia, who was Cáceres' constant harasser and was arrested as one of the masterminds behind the assassination (and is yet to be sentenced), is a former military intelligence officer [7].

<sup>2</sup> Uncolonized peoples refer to indigenous communities who retreated to the interior and the highlands to avoid western colonialism, during which various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world. In the Philippines, these uncolonized peoples pertain to the Indigenous Peoples of the Cordillera in the north and the Lumads and the Moros of Mindanao in the south.

“landscape” includes not only the technical and material backdrops that sustain societies but also the intangible “assets” such as political ideologies, social values, demographic trends, and macro-economic patterns [19]. These assets are also present in an energyscape, affecting energy sociotechnical systems in dynamic ways in terms of spatial and temporal struggles, chaos, ebbs and flows. Social groups and a variety of interest-laden actors advance and protect their interests, capital, visions of the future, and imaginaries in an energyscape. Here, actors create pathways through either cooperation or destruction as manifest in power struggles, mobilizations, prefigurative actions (where desirable future conditions or systems are demonstrated or enacted in the present), and other forms of social actions. Since these various actors have different levels and sources of power, the ways by which pathways are created are heavily dependent on their skills and capacities to negotiate. This paper illustrates how an energyscape is made (and continually remade) in the Philippines, alongside backlashes, tensions and contestations amongst differently skilled and capacitated actors.

On that regard, the paper also uses the concept of social mobilization: in particular, the processes and dynamics of organizing dissent of fragmented constituencies through indigenously produced networked approaches [20,21]. In this paper, a focus is made towards Indigenous Peoples’ mobilization and their use of traditional tools and mechanisms for building alliances and producing a coherent identity to bring together multiple actors under one coherent umbrella so that they could register their fierce opposition. Bringing these previously less-identified narratives front-and-center represents this paper’s core theoretical contribution.

## 4. Background

### 4.1. The Philippines and its Indigenous Peoples

The Philippines (2015 population: 101 million) is an archipelagic southeast Asian nation of 7641 islands. If the number of languages is to be taken as an indicator of its heterogeneity, the country’s 185 languages—of which 183 are living and two are extinct [22]—would reveal that it is an enormous, ethnically diverse society. Although official Indigenous Peoples’ statistics in the Philippines are yet to be gathered, the United Nations Development Program [23] estimates that there are 14 to 17 million Indigenous Peoples in the country belonging to 110 ethnolinguistic groups.

Indigenous Peoples’ struggles for recognition of their ancestral domains and their diverse understandings of land-nature-food-human relationships are part and parcel of a complicated Philippine history. These histories include the raids of haciendas during the last decades of Spanish colonization, the *Huk* resistance movements during and after World War II, and the legal and revolutionary battles against neoliberal land reforms of the modern era [24–30]. The Philippine state, in its 1987 Constitution, officially “recognizes and promotes the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development” (Article II, Section 22), and further recognizes Indigenous Peoples through the 1997 Republic Act 8371 or the Indigenous People’s Right Act (IPRA), which was promulgated as the cornerstone of the state’s Indigenous Peoples’ policy [31]. Section 3h of the law defined Philippine Indigenous Peoples as

... a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by other, who have continuously lived as an organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed customs, tradition and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and culture, become historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos. Indigenous Peoples shall likewise include peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the

populations which inhabited the country, at the time of conquest or colonization, or at the time of inroads of non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral domains.

As in other parts of the world, access to and authority over natural resources—such as land, mineral and forest assets and those falling under the rubric of indigenous intellectual property rights—are central amongst Indigenous Peoples’ issues in the Philippines (cf. [32,33]). Resource access and authority over them sit well along related Indigenous Peoples’ concepts of cultural identity, self-determination, and recognition of indigenous legal systems [5,34–36]. Because of these intricate relationships, some Philippine laws are deeply entrenched with IPRA. The 1982 Forestry Reform Code and the 1995 Mining Act are key examples. With many Indigenous Peoples’ habitats, lands, and territories overlapping with most forests and prospective mining sites, indigenous lands are often viewed by the Philippine state as “natural resources to be exploited.” The legal framework that would supposedly protect indigenous rights has not been enough to respect the self-determination of these peoples. Since its enactment in 1997, IPRA was both praised (e.g. for increasing awareness on Indigenous Peoples’ rights in the Philippines) and criticized (e.g. for encouraging corruption in the issuance of FPICs) [37,38].

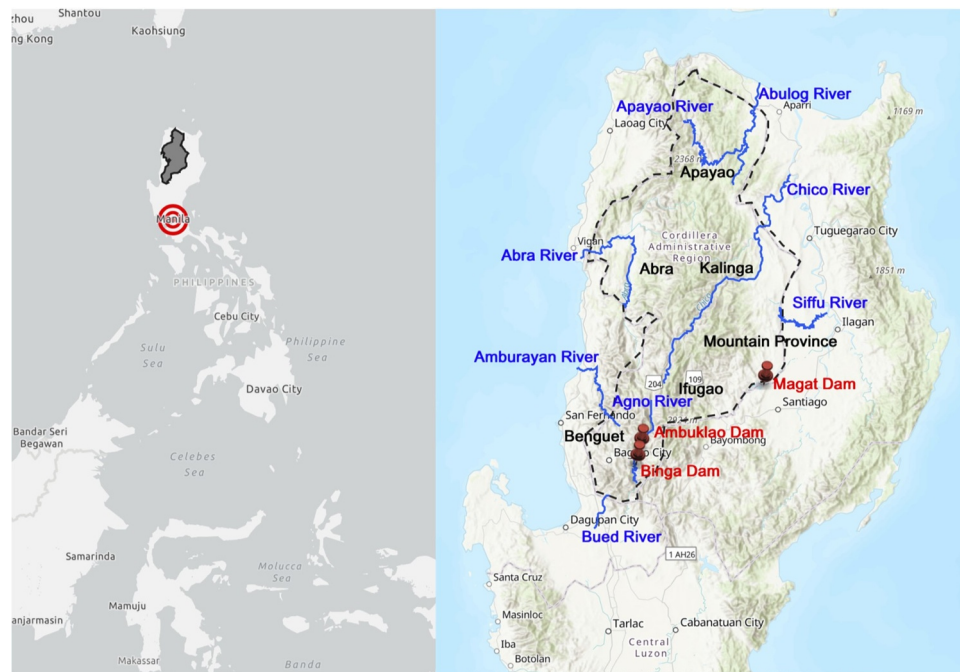
### 4.2. National development and the role of hydropower in the Philippines’ national energyscape

The large-scale changes arising from the Philippines’ growing population and fast-developing economy [39] has been pressuring the country’s energyscape. The country’s location within the typhoon belt also impacts this energyscape, especially since the Philippines’ natural and social resources are fast becoming vulnerable to extreme weather events such as strong winds, floods, and rising sea levels—risks potentiated by rapid climate change [40]. The Philippine’s archipelagic configuration also proves to be a key determinant of this energyscape, especially in achieving its vision of energy security—the principal driver of the state-conceived growth development model. Since this geography increases the technical difficulty for centralized energy transmission, a decentralized approach would be more relevant to the Philippine context. Liberalization is another driver: a state policy made in response to the neoliberal turn in the 1990s. While designed to strengthen private actor participation, liberalization has only resulted into some locked-in conditions as profoundly manifest for instance in terms of the State favoring select energy resources such as coal, natural gas—particularly from the country’s own Malampaya and Libertad gas fields—and large hydro for electricity generation [41]. The country’s official energyscape outlook for the next ten years mirrors this locked-in conditions: a continued reliance on coal and oil (accounting for more than 30% of the total primary energy supply in 2030), with some contributions from geothermal (13.7%), biomass (13.3%) and hydro (4.9%) [42].

Hydropower, which accounts for 18% of installed capacity in the Philippines, continues to enjoy priority in state planning,<sup>3</sup> despite its limited capacity growth in recent years [43]. The Duterte Government (2016–2022) has been seeking foreign debt to support hydropower development, regardless of the financing issues attached to this energy resource [44]. Of note here are China-funded dam development projects in Luzon: those in Chico River, in Cordillera region and the Kaliwa Dam, in Rizal province—all in Luzon island. Hydropower plants,

<sup>3</sup> The Philippine Energy Plan 2016–2030 targets the commissioning of 1,554-MW hydropower installed capacity [42] [compare this with 4,312 MW of installed capacity in 2017 [43]].





**Fig. 2.** The Cordillera region (relative to the Philippine islands) and its provinces (in black font), major Rivers (in blue font), and existing hydropower facilities (in red font). (For interpretation of the references to colour in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

especially those located in Indigenous Peoples' lands, has notably become contentious since these projects bring social, environmental, and cultural controversies [45,46], including militarization [5,47,48]. As this article goes to press, large-scale dam projects in Luzon have been tension-filled. (I tackle these tensions in the discussion below). Most important amongst these many sites in the Philippines is the hydropower-rich Cordillera region.

#### 4.3. The Philippine Cordillera: geography and brief history

The Cordillera (2015 population: 1.72 million), a landlocked and mountainous region bordered by Cagayan Valley (to the north, east and southeast) and Ilocos (in the west and southwest) regions, is the Philippines' least populated and least densely populated region. Covering most of the Cordillera mountains, the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR) comprises the six landlocked provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, and Mountain Province (see Fig. 2). This region is considered the Philippines' most diversified ethnolinguistic region: it is home to 33% of Indigenous Peoples [23], where 38 ethnicities speak at least ten languages [22].

Spain, which occupied the Philippines for 377 years (1521–1898), experienced great difficulty in its attempts to conquer the Cordillera. For hundreds of years, the Indigenous Peoples of Cordillera engaged in battles with the Spanish forces [49,50]. During the American occupation (1898–1946), the Philippine Commission, the administrative arm of the US Government, created the Mountain Province which covered most of the Cordillera [51]. During World War II, Cordillera became a theater of war where General Tomoyuki Yamashita, who led the Japanese forces during the invasion of Malaya and the Battle of Singapore, would launch his last stand in Ifugao, where he also informally surrendered on 2 September 1945.

The Cordillera has long been considered an important resource base for the development of mineral, logging, and power industries. CAR possesses the country's highest hydropower resource potential, largely due to its location at the headwaters of Luzon's major rivers including: Abra (in the province of Abra), Abulog (Kalinga), Agno (Benguet), Amburayan (Benguet), Apayao (Apayao), Bued (Benguet), Chico (Cagayan River's major tributary and traverses Kalinga and Mountain

Province), and Siffo (Ifugao and Mountain Province) (see Fig. 2). These river systems supply irrigation water to most of Central Luzon, Ilocos and Cagayan regions, making the CAR the watershed cradle of northern Luzon.

The Cordillera Regional Development Plan,<sup>4</sup> which reflects the region's energy potential, places a high priority on hydropower to complement existing Magat, Ambuklao, and Binga hydropower plants (see Fig. 2) and several run-of-river hydropower plants (mostly in Bakun, La Trinidad, Sablan and Tuba municipalities in Benguet province), which supply more than half of the Luzon Grid's average energy demand. The 388-MW Magat plant has continuously operated since the 1980s. The 75-MW Ambuklao plant stopped producing hydroelectricity in 2000 because of river and reservoir siltation but has since been rehabilitated and expanded to 105-MW capacity following an auction in 2007 [52]. The 100-MW Binga plant—also severely silted but continues to receive augmented water supply from Ambuklao—was in intermittent production until it was rehabilitated into a 105-MW capacity in 2011 [53]. The Aboitiz Group, along with Norway's Statkraft Norfund (SN) Power Invest—operating as SN Aboitiz Power (SNAP)—manages these dams. Benguet's small hydropower plants are privately operated by the Luzon Hydro Corporation—a joint venture of the Pacific Hydro Latitude and the Aboitiz Group. Another key player was the Ayala Corporation, which entered into a joint venture with Sta. Clara Power Corporation, to form the QuadRiver Energy Corporation, until its divestment in 2017 “due to some concerns of project approvals and host community issues” [54]. It is interesting to note here the political economy of Cordillera's energyscape, where key actors would include elite Philippine corporations named after dynastic families such as the Aboitizes and the Ayalas, and their intertwined relationships with global energy elites such as SN. Hydropower projects in Cordillera, both existing and planned, however, have long been objects of contention for Cordillera Indigenous Peoples, who have been organizing to register their dissent.

<sup>4</sup> The Philippine National Economic and Development Authority, through its regional office in the Cordillera, convenes government and private sector actors to develop and update this regional plan.

## 5. The birth of the narratives of mobilization

### 5.1. The Chico river dam project and Indigenous Peoples' dissent

The Government of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos (1965–1986), himself hailing from northern Luzon, proposed the damming of the Chico River using World Bank funds. Chico River, which is the longest tributary of the Cagayan River and traverses both the Cordillera and Cagayan Valley regions, has its headwaters in Mount Data in Bauko (Mountain Province) (see Fig. 3). The Kalinga Indigenous Peoples live on its banks, and, for three decades (1960s to 1980s), resisted the Chico River Dam Project. This resistance became a landmark case study concerning Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines, led to World Bank's operational guidelines on Indigenous Peoples-affected projects, and, most importantly, built an identity for the Igorot peoples (a collective term for Cordillera's Indigenous Peoples), according to Bantayog ng mga Bayani (*translation: Monument of Heroes*) [55]. The making of this identity, this paper argues, became an important part of Indigenous Peoples' mobilization narrative and in the production of dissent in Philippine energyscape.

First conceived in 1965, the Chico River Dam Project was proposed as a multipurpose facility for irrigation and hydropower generation. The project became more feasible when the price of oil quadrupled due to the Oil Shock of 1973–1974, following an oil embargo by OPEC against the United States [56]. Marcos asked the World Bank to fund the construction of four dams: a 100-MW and 360-MW facilities in Sabangan (Mountain Province), a 100-MW facility in Tinglayan (Kalinga), and a 450-MW facility in Tabuk (Kalinga) [57] (see Fig. 3).

Marcos, however, made the proposal without the knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples who live in these places. The Marcos Government then tapped the German firm Lahmeyer International GMBH (Frankfurt) to conduct technical feasibility studies, which they submitted in 1973 [58]. By 1974—during which surveyors from the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR), a government agency in-charge of power generation and transmission, conducted surveys in preparation for dam construction—the Indigenous Peoples finally learned about the Project. They went to see Marcos in Malacañang, the presidential residence in Manila, who scolded them saying they would need to sacrifice something on behalf of national development [55]. To pacify the Indigenous Peoples, Marcos sent Manuel “Manda” Elizalde, his Presidential Assistant for National Minorities “to the Chico area, bringing with him truckloads of food, chocolate bars, basketballs, flashlights and other trinkets” [55,59].

The Project would impact Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods and culture as it would submerge their sacred lands from south of Bontoc (Mountain Province) to north of Tomiangan in Tabuk (Kalinga) [60]. The construction of the Tabuk facility alone would lead to the complete submergence of six *barangays* (*translation: villages, the smallest administrative division in the Philippines*) rendering more than 100,000 Kalinga and Bontoc Indigenous Peoples homeless [58]. To mitigate these impacts, the Marcos Government offered financial incentives if communities agreed to be relocated. The Indigenous Peoples, however, rejected these overtures citing ancestor worship—where dead ancestors are believed to be forever present in the place [58]—and the obliteration of tribal relationships across Indigenous People communities as expressed in their *bodong* (*translation: peace pacts and alliances*), which

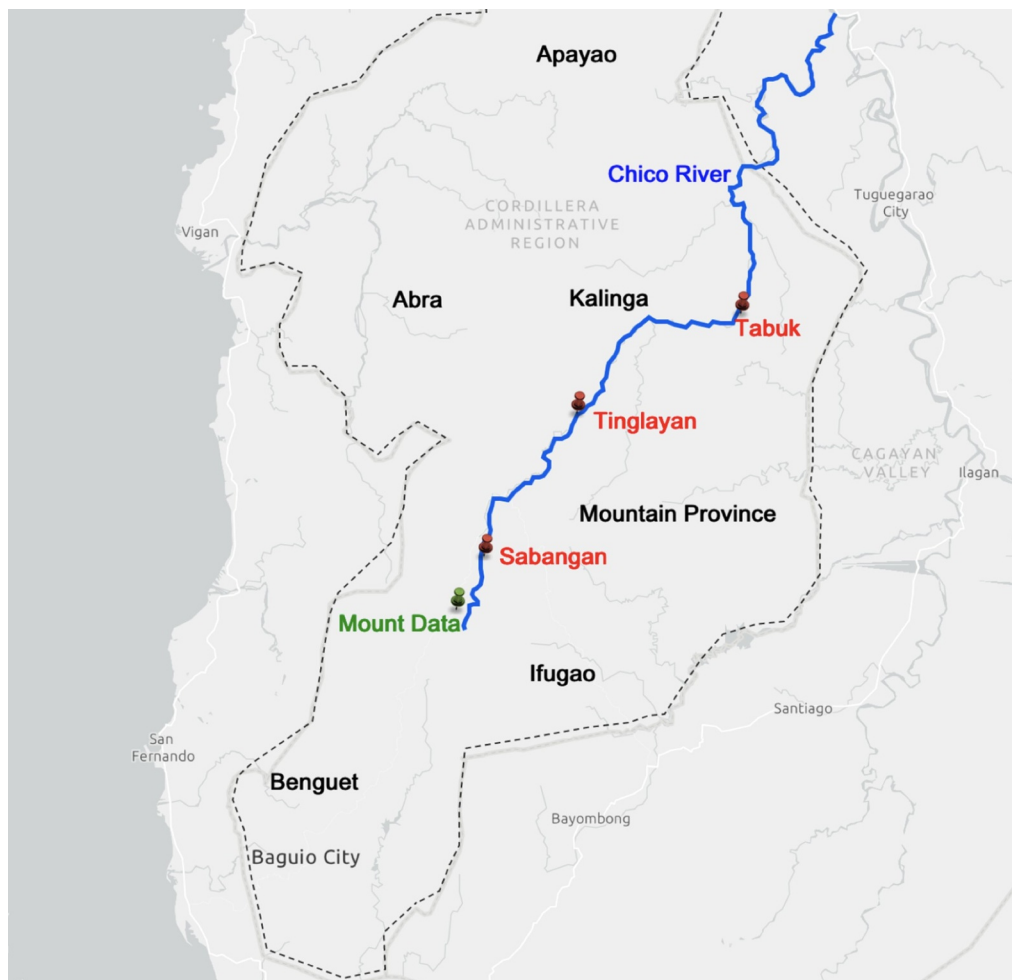


Fig. 3. The Chico River and the locations of the proposed hydropower facilities in the 1970s planned World Bank-funded Chico River Dam Project.

form the system of laws in these places<sup>5</sup> [58]. Macli-ing Dulag, a *pangat* (translation: leader) of the Butbut people of Kalinga, expressed the Indigenous Peoples' collective dissent and registered his willingness to die for their lands in an interview by Ma. Ceres Doyo [61]:

...the question of the dam is more than political. The question is life—our Kalinga life. *Apo Kabunian*,<sup>6</sup> the Lord of us all, gave us this land. It is sacred, nourished by our sweat. It shall become even more sacred when it is nourished by our blood.

As NAPOCOR began their survey mission, Macli-ing organized a *bodong* in Tanglang (Kalinga) to rally opposition against the project. A group of women, meanwhile, went to NAPOCOR's campsites in Basao (Tinglayan, Kalinga), dismantled them, and performed the *lusay*, where elderly women disrobed and displayed their tattooed torsos and limbs in front of soldiers and surveyors, an act believed to bring bad luck to men observing them ([60], cf. [62]).

A year later, in May 1975, at St. Bridget's School in Quezon City in Metro Manila, 150 pangats organized the Bodong Federation, an alliance to collectively oppose the Project, and produced an agreement called *Pagta ti Bodong*, which, for the first time, formally united the Bontoc and Kalinga Indigenous Peoples in opposition [61,63]. This *pagta*, a multilateral agreement against a common external threat brought about by the dam project, consolidated the resistance [64]. The group received widespread support from academics, church groups, and NGOs, including the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the Episcopal Commission on Tribal Filipinos, and the Free Legal Assistance Group, as well as from groups abroad [55]. This dissent forced the Marcos Government to temporarily pull out its NAPOCOR survey team.

To neutralize opposition, Marcos [65], governing with Presidential Decrees—a power he granted himself as a dictator—constituted the Kalinga Special Development Region consisting Lubuagan, Tinglayan, Tanudan and Pasil municipalities. These are municipalities affected by the proposed dam, and where indigenous oppositions were from. Macli-ing Dulag was from Tinglayan. With the Philippines under the Marcos dictatorship (1972–1981), Project-affected areas were duly militarized to control dissent. The Government brought in the 51st and 60th Philippine Constabulary Brigades and the 44th Philippine Army Brigade to strengthen the Philippine Constabulary forces already present in the area. In April 1977, these state agents arrested, without warrant, at least 150 locals (including pangats) accusing them of subversion and obstruction [58]. The incarceration of the pangats, however, did not avert further mobilizations; instead Indigenous Peoples organized a larger *bodong* in June 1978. The Government, in response, declared parts of the Chico River “free fire zones,” where its armed forces could freely fire on any trespassers at will [58]. In December 1979, the pangats organized another *bodong*—this time with more than two thousand Indigenous Peoples present—and designated Macli-ing (Fig. 4) as the opposition's official spokesperson [61].

On 24 April 1980, Marcos' military agents in the Army's 4th Infantry Division led by Lt. Leodegario Adalem opened fire on Macli-ing's home (and his neighbor's, Pedro Dungoc, another project opponent) in Bugnay, municipality of Tinglayan, in the province of Kalinga [60,66].



Fig. 4. Macli-ing Dulag [60].

Instead of crippling the dissenters, the assassination unified not only the Bontoc and Kalinga Indigenous Peoples but the various Cordillera Indigenous Peoples in their opposition [55]. Subsequent mobilizations were carried out with explicit reference to Macli-ing's murder. As a result, the Marcos Government and the World Bank were pushed to abandon the Chico Dam Project [55].

## 5.2. The legacy of Macli-ing Dulag and the *Pagta ti Bodong*

Macli-ing's assassination left indelible marks not only in Cordillera but also beyond it. These legacies spanned across places and time—that have, since then, informed the making of Philippine energyscape. Between 1981 and 1994, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (more details about this organization below) celebrated the Macli-ing Memorials [67]. Since 1985, the date of Macli-ing's murder—24 April—was memorialized by the same organization as the Cordillera Day [68]. The *Pagta ti Bodong*—a manifesto of organized and networked Indigenous Peoples—proved to be an essential element for effective social action as it brought under one coherent umbrella a formidable anti-dam opposition [20,21]. Macli-ing's assassination by those in power had also effectively served as a trigger device, another key element of mobilizations [20,21]. Both events became narratives animating Indigenous Peoples' dissent against the Project, building up a strong sense of Igorot identity. Prior to their collective anti-dam protest, Cordillera's Indigenous Peoples were mutually suspicious of each other and had longstanding animus based on their headhunting practices [69]. Suffice

<sup>5</sup> The Indigenous Peoples of the Cordillera, particularly the Kalingas, have been using the *bodong* as a peace treaty, a unique judicial system where tribes would resolve their disputes and to forge tribal alliances. A *bodong* has essential steps to be followed, beginning in a *sipat* where two objects of equal value are exchanged between two parties, usually men, who wanted to establish a peace treaty. This is followed by *simsim* where a ritual is done in the village of the treaty's initiator. At this time, parties discuss and announce in public their grievances. A large celebration called *lonok* follows, where parties and their kins are invited to discuss payments of indemnities and where the provisions of the treaty are drawn up in a *pagta* [94].

<sup>6</sup> In Cordillera religion, *Apo Kabunian* is the supreme ruler of the universe, or, in some places in the region, is the collective term to denote all deities [95].



to say, the mobilizations left important imprints in establishing an identity that was broadly shared, and which continue to influence present-day mobilizations and the making of contemporary Philippine energyscape.

With the collective Igorot identity achieved, a united Cordillera front was also established, which was key in producing the “autonomous Cordillera” imaginary [55,69,70]. Former Catholic priest Conrado Balweg, inspired by Macli-ing's martyrdom, founded the militant group Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) to advocate for autonomy [71]. In 1986, Balweg eventually signed a ceasefire agreement with the Government of Corazon Aquino (1986–1992) [72,73]. The NPA, however, assassinated him in 1999 [74]. In 1987, following the ouster of Marcos from power, the Cordilleran autonomy was amongst the Aquino Government's first agendas. To date, this imagined governance arrangement for the Cordillera, however, remains unrealized [75].

Another organization, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), was created in June 1984 in Bontoc (Mountain Province) to carry out collective Indigenous Peoples' dissents in the Cordillera. The CPA is a federation of progressive, mostly grassroots-based, Indigenous Peoples organizations in the region promoting and defending “Indigenous Peoples' rights, human rights, social justice, and national freedom and democracy” [76]. It is one of the convenors of the Save the Abra River Movement, a coalition of organizations campaigning against further river pollution by Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company [76,77]. The CPA also assists the displaced Ibaloi Indigenous Peoples and Binga families in their demands following the construction of the Binga and Ambuklao dams [78]. The federation also supports the Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples of Eheb and Tukucan (Tinoc, Ifugao) in their decision to rescind their Memorandum of Agreement with QuadRiver Energy Corporation based on irregularities, manipulation, and railroading of their FPIC [79]. The CPA also campaigns for the decommissioning of San Roque Dam, a 200-meter tall, 1.2-kilometer long embankment dam on the Agno River.

## 6. Present-day relevance of Macli-ing Dulag's martyrdom

### 6.1. Ifugao and the damming of its rivers

Ifugao (capital: Lagawe; 2015 population: 202,802; 11 municipalities, 175 barangays) is a landlocked Cordillera province bordered by Mountain Province to the north, Isabela to the east, Benguet to the west, and Nueva Viscaya to the south. The major Indigenous Peoples of Ifugao are the Tuwali, Ayangan, and Kalanguya. Ifugao is home to the five sites of The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, which were inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1995: the Mayoyao, Hungduan and Nagacadan Rice Terraces. Compared to other terraces, these terraces reach higher altitudes and were built on steeper slopes (see Fig. 5).

Just like other Cordillera provinces, Ifugao has numerous river systems. The Ibulao and Alimit Rivers flow to the Magat River, which provide irrigation water to the rice lands of Isabela and Quirino provinces, as well as impoundment for the Magat Hydro in Ramon (Isabela) and Alfonso Lista (see Fig. 6). Constructed from 1980 to 1983 and in operation since August 1983, the 380-MW Magat hydropower plant is one of Luzon's largest hydropower facilities. SNAP won the bid for its privatization in 2006 and took over operations since April 2007.

In 2019, SNAP received a government license to develop the 390-MW Alimit Hydropower Project in Ifugao, also named by the Philippines' Department of Energy (DOE) as an energy project of national significance (EPNS) [80]. The Alimit Project, SNAP's largest hydropower project in Cordillera, comprises a complex of three hydroelectric plants: the 250-MW Alimit pumped storage plant and the conventional 120-MW Alimit and 20-MW Olilicon plants [81], traversing Mayoyao, Aginaldo, Lagawe and Lamut municipalities (all in Ifugao province) [82].

Mayoyao (2015 population: 17,331), an agricultural town dating back to precolonial time, comprises 27 barangays. Aginaldo (2015 population: 19,408), formerly a part of Mayoyao before it separated in 1980 as an independent municipality, covers 16 barangays. Most of its people speak the Ayangan language. Lagawe (2015 population: 19,333), Ifugao's capital and composed of 20 barangays, also traces back its history to the pre-Spanish colonial era. Most of its people speak the Tuwali language. Lamut (2015 population: 25,279), a municipality since 1959, is subdivided into 18 barangays. The people of Lamut are a mixture of Ilocano (from Nueva Viscaya) and the Ifugao Indigenous Peoples.

In 2014, SNAP started their FPIC process following the approval of its energy service contract by the DOE. IPRA requires an FPIC for development projects in ancestral lands or using resources within Indigenous Peoples' territory, and defined this “consent” to mean [31, Section 3g]:

... the consensus of all members of the Indigenous Peoples to be determined in accordance with their respective customary laws and practices, free from any external manipulation, interference and coercion, and obtained after fully disclosing the intent and scope of the activity, in a language and process understandable to the community.

The IPRA also created the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the agency responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs to protect and promote Indigenous Peoples' rights. The NCIP, which comprises seven Commissioners, themselves Indigenous Persons, appointed by the President of the Philippines with administrative, quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative powers, issues certificates of ancestral domain titles and certification as a pre-condition to the award of any permits, leases, or grants to companies, government, or any other entity for use of any portion of an ancestral domain. The IPRA requires that the NCIP certify that the communities gave their consent to the exploitation of natural resources in their ancestral domains as a condition of project approval [31].

In 2019, four years after engaging Indigenous Peoples' organizations, SNAP obtained an agreement with the municipal government of Lamut [83,84]. This completed the required local government approvals, which supposedly signifies Indigenous Peoples' consent for the Alimit Project [85,86], yet one that has been an object of dissent.

### 6.2. Contentions around the Alimit project

The narratives of Indigenous Peoples' dissent against large hydropower dams that begun at Macli-ing's time once again echoed in Ifugao. An informant from Kiangán—Ifugao's oldest town and said to be the birthplace of the Ifugao people, who leads a non-governmental organization to protect and make known the Ifugao culture, made the Macli-ing-Ifugao connection :<sup>7</sup>

Magat dam is close to Ramon (Isabela) but it is Ifugao water that feeds it. There are also submerged areas that were part of Aginaldo, Lagawe, and Mayoyao (all parts of Ifugao). Macli-ing had died in Kalinga but our (Ifugao) leaders at the time Magat dam was proposed were equally brave. If not for their dissent, submerged areas could have been wider (Informant 1).

The same respondent, however, made one distinction between Macli-ing's dissent (in Kalinga) with the Alimit Project (in Ifugao), continuing:

Macli-ing was uneducated but he knows the implications of the Chico River Dam Project. I am wondering, despite the high level of

<sup>7</sup> Note that Macli-ing's dissent occurred in Kalinga, a province in the Cordillera; this respondent, by contrast, spoke about his elders from Ifugao, another province (see Figure 2).



Fig. 5. The Batad Rice Terraces in Banawe, Ifugao, a UNESCO World Heritage site (Photographed by the author, November 2017).

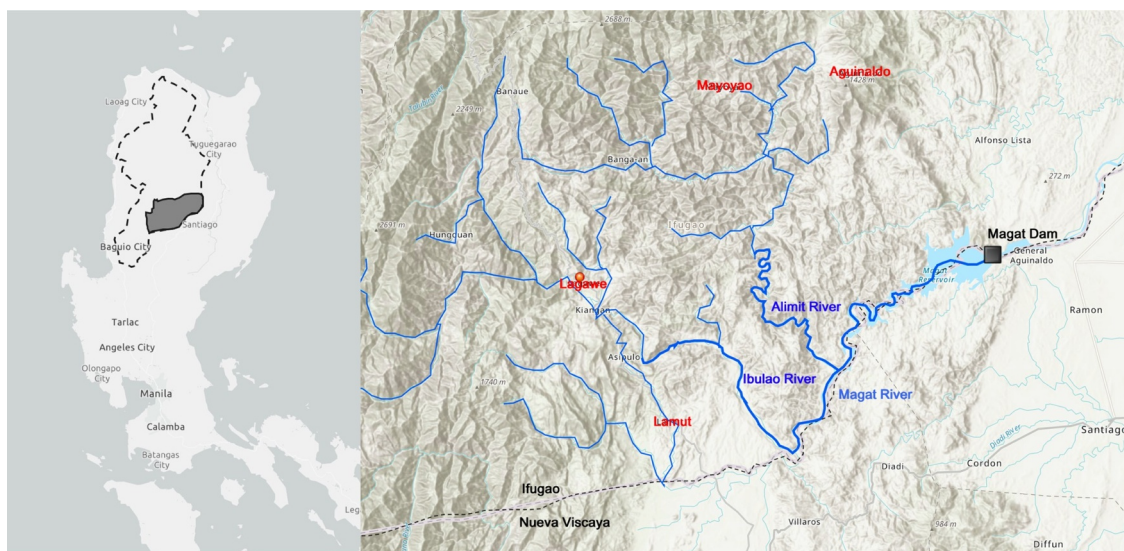


Fig. 6. Ifugao's three major Rivers.

education of many people of Ifugao, there are still dam advocates (Informant 1).

One respondent—from an Ifugao-based movement—however, noted:

We always hope that there will never be a martyrdom of anyone. That's number one. The idea we are pushing for is not a one-person-centric leadership; we are trying to push “everyone can be a leader,” and hopefully it doesn't amount to someone of that figure, like Macli-ing Dulag, for the community to be galvanized into opposing the project (Informant 2).

As in Marcos' repressive regime, similar state tactics were again employed by agents of Duterte's Government to intimidate dissenters. A respondent from a national network of Indigenous Peoples shared:

Our organizers on the ground are being harassed. They are on the order of battle of the military. They are the ones who are openly

resisting so they are also the most threatened, including being red tagged (Informant 3).

Brandon Lee,<sup>8</sup> whose attempted assassination was mentioned in this paper's introduction, had been at the receiving end of such harassment. Lee narrates his 2017 experience—also reported in distilled form in *The Philippine Daily Inquirer* [87]—to this paper's author, six months after the event. *In toto* below is Lee's narration.

Red-baiting, vilification, heavy-intense surveillance from the military, as part of the state, has never bothered us before, until this dam.

<sup>8</sup> Brandon Lee is named here since he has become a public figure. His assassination attempt in August 2019 and the harassment he experienced in 2017—which is reported in more detail in this part of the paper—were reported in news media and is therefore common knowledge.



I'm married here. The relatives of my wife are in the police. They had already warned that I am in a military list.

They had gunned down the Ifugao Peasants Movement's former human rights officer, the person I replaced.

If you don't want your daughter to be orphaned, you better keep out.

Before going to the Cordillera Day in Kalinga, we were stopped in a checkpoint in Balbalan (Kalinga).

You can easily Google my name: "Brandon Lee, Cordillera Day" and they will talk about my experience on the news. Many different outlets.

At the checkpoint, they said they were first looking for Kennedy Bangibang, who is a Cordillera People's Democratic Front peace consultant. Everyone on the bus says he is not on this bus.

They went up and down looking for him. They cannot find him.

And then, they looked at me, and they said, can I see your identification?

I said, why do you want to see my ID?

Do you see this, pointing to his collar with a ribbon, it means I'm a man of authority.

It shows his rank. He's a lieutenant.

But why do you want to see my ID?

Because we're here to also investigate. If I'm not mistaken, you are a guest in our country, and as a guest you must follow our laws.

I said, okay I'm following your laws. I never violated anything. Here's my ID. Is there a problem?

No problem. Just wanted to say how do you find Kalinga?

It's okay.

He stepped out of the bus. He talked to the policeman outside.

The policeman came in. He said, are you Brandon Lee?

Yes.

Please step off the bus.

Did I do something wrong?

No, not yet.

Okay, so I stepped off the bus.

He showed me his phone with a text message: Brandon Lee search his bag for *baril* (gun) and a description of my *balbas* (beard).

At the time, I had a long beard, long hair.

...and sightings with this so and so people.

You can feel my bag, there's no gun. I don't consent to a search on my bag. You can just feel it.

They still pushed on for an hour.

So, they searched my bag.

At one point, lights went off and my companion said: Close the bag! Close the bag! Because they might *tanim-bala*.<sup>9</sup>

In the checkpoint, no nametags. One of the laws (say)...(they should have) nametags, should be well lit...and in the area there is no (cellphone) signal, (how) I can call my lawyer.

So, these are just the few examples... of my experience... harassments... and death threats...

The primary contention towards SNAP's Alimit Project goes a long way into the history of Indigenous Peoples' persecution, injustice and discrimination in the Philippines [29,36], one that resonated well at Macli-ing's time: how Indigenous Peoples would truly and fairly benefit from national development projects implemented in their ancestral domains.

We found that majority of lands near the River and the communities in the lowland are the ones that are affected, and they don't want the project at all. Mostly in Lamut and two communities in Lagawe are against it; but others are trying to push for it because of the royalties. This causes friction on the Ayangan families. They are fighting. Who is benefiting from this? That is what we usually ask the people (Informant 2).

A community leader reverted to Ifugao history to illustrate this point, saying:

People's experience with Magat dam is illustrative. The Alimit project is the continuation of the Magat dam project. It affects the same people from Lagawe and Mayoyao. For many decades, these people got nothing from Magat dam. They collected not a single centavo. They were promised before and they are promised the same today (Informant 3).

The Ayangans, one of the three Ifugao Indigenous Peoples, are the most affected by the SNAP project. They are in these four municipalities, speak the same language, but are differently affected. Lowlanders, compared to the highlanders, are the most affected because the SNAP complex is found in these areas. In Lagawe, most communities say a conditional yes: yes, if SNAP meets their conditions. Example, SNAP has to provide our children with scholarships to study abroad so that they can become engineers who will run the complex in the future. Lamut is mostly no. Aguinaldo and Mayoyao already said yes. Lagawe, yes but conditionally. They are trying to figure out royalties, wealth sharing. Very divisive. Some based on population, water, area affected... (Informant 2).

The IPRA's Implementing Rules was clear about the Indigenous Peoples' "right to benefit sharing" [88, Section 4c] but does not mention specific percentages. However, an Ifugao leader asked:

In a perfect world, we would see billions of revenues; but, where is it going? Who benefits? The security guards? These companies bring token benefits to give the semblance of "involving" communities – but for low-paid positions (Interview 2017a).

The respondent from the network of Indigenous Peoples communities shared the same sentiment:

Even if we compute the benefits and compare it to business-as-usual, Indigenous Peoples do not stand to win (Informant 3).

Although the similarities between Macli-ing's mobilizations and the contemporary dissent in Ifugao are salient around issues of "who benefits" and "what are the benefits," there are also differences between these movements. The FPIC process, which was in response to the anti-Chico River dam dissent by bringing in indigenous voices in decision-making, has, in the case of present-day anti-Alimit dam dissent, instead, became an object of contention (cf. [89]). The FPIC process was developed to serve as a mechanism to protect Indigenous Peoples' interests in their ancestral domains, including: their right to stay in their territories; right to religious, cultural sites, and ceremonies; right to give or withhold access to their biological and genetic resources and indigenous knowledge related to the conservation, use, and enhancement of these resources; and right to redemption in cases where land/property rights have been transferred without their consent [31]. However, one respondent perceived that the FPIC process

can be manipulated because they are framed with the purpose of

<sup>9</sup> *Tanim-bala* is a criminal scheme where authorities would *tanim* ("plant") *bala* ("bullets") inside people's bags to extort money from the unlucky victims.

manipulation by a manipulative government, which have interests different from that of the people. At all cost, government can tweak these processes. For example, NCIP can create and lead new Indigenous People organizations; they can also consult Indigenous People communities that are not affected by the project. FPIC is also limited in that they set the process and decide who should talk. It's really not "free" (Informant 3).

Perceptions about the independence of the NCIP to facilitate FCIPs are also salient as one respondent expounded:

We found in Tinoc that NCIP is really pushing hard for the project. When the people stood up, and said we demand the right to be heard, [NCIP Officer A], from the Central Office, told them to sit down. Here at the province, it was very hard. [Officer B], because at the Tinoc experience, [Officer B] accompanied [Officer A]. And [Officer B] also supported the Project. For SNAP, NCIP gets a lot of funding for food, for rice. In the [Ifugao] culture, you don't bite the hands that feed you. NCIP don't have funds to do these processes. The Guidelines say that project proponents must provide these resources. People mistook them as bribes, but this is structural. NCIP would complain about this. They are put in a bad light, but they have no recourse. The Guidelines say they must provide meals (Informant 2).

Another respondent also raised similar questions:

Project proponents had to pay for the *per diem* of NCIP employees. It's their job. Why should they have to be paid for it? (Interview 2017a).

Furthermore, the IPRA also requires an FPIC to "explore, excavate or make diggings on archeological sites" of Indigenous Peoples [31]; however, a key informant described how SNAP violated this provision stating,

SNAP claim they did archeological digs. We checked with the National Museum, which said there had been no application for digs in the sites. As an Ifugao, this is important. We want to know our history.<sup>10</sup> But with this Project, we are now in the verge of becoming forgotten people. We can know more about ourselves through archaeology; but now you are constructing dams. What if there are old villages that will be submerged? These sites are along the riverbanks, along Ibulao (River). Our oral literature is replete with mention of stories about us. We can put these stories side-by-side with archeological study. Our oral literature says there are smaller villages below, near Ibulao (River). These settlements later move up to the Old Kiyangan Village. This is common wherever you go; civilizations start on the riverside (Interview 2017a).

Another different tactic employed in the anti-Alimit dam project was to trace the developer's track records. SNAP's corporate history has indeed become another issue that dissenting groups had highlighted.

SN expertise is oil. It is transitioning to hydro to clean up its reputation. Aboitiz also wants to greenwash its image (Informant 2).

On similar vein, Aboitiz's own energyscape-making track records were also made central in the opposition:

In Davao del Sur, Hedcor, which is an Aboitiz company, made a powerplant in a sacred waterfall to the Bagobo people of Tudaya in Sibulan, Santa Cruz. Aboitiz is also involved in a potentially destructive drilling in Mount Negron, in an Aeta land, to extract

geothermal energy. The issue with Aboitiz is because of their many projects (Informant 3).

Despite the approval of the Alimit Project, mobilizers still hope that their dissent would one day become meaningful. One respondent cited the success from Tinoc (Ifugao) where Indigenous Peoples stopped an Ayala-funded and already-agreed upon hydropower project "because people barricaded" (Informant 2)—a tactic similar to the anti-Chico dam protest at Macli-ing's time. Another respondent highlighted another example in the

mining issue in Nueva Viscaya where people barricaded roads leading to mine sites. The project was eventually halted. If they have the guns, gold and goods, we have warm bodies (Informant 3)

While the Alimit Project had been subject to stern Indigenous Peoples' contestations, not all hydropower projects are unwelcomed in Indigenous Peoples' domains in Ifugao. Dissenters would then use prefigurative narratives to highlight alternative development pathways that they could support.

We know that large dams are destructive, so we look for alternatives especially since we need to do the (energy) transition (Informant 3).

We look at the rights-based approach. First, what does the community need or want? That's what we asked. We don't look at will it give lots of money to the province, whether it is least damaging or not. We want to be self-reliant. We want the people to be able to fish instead of being given fish. But we don't think that the best way is to give the community only 1% of the profits (Informant 2).

Another respondent agrees with this alternative energyscape for Ifugao:

Regardless of the technology, you must ask: who owns it? who controls it? what are the immediate benefits to affected communities? what are people's rights towards these technologies? We are for pro-people technologies. We need irrigation water. We need electricity. But, does the community want it? Especially if it is on an Indigenous People's land. It is theirs, ever since. Self-determination is important (Informant 3).

A respondent from the Kiangang-based organization for the protection of Ifugao's heritage and rice terraces, raised his support towards one of these prefigurative projects: a micro-hydro-dominated energyscape in their province:

We support small-scale hydropower, like the Ambangal project (Interview 2017a).

The 200-kW Ambangal micro-hydro project, which taps water from the Ambangal River as it flows through a valley between Ambabag and Pindungan (Kiangang, Ifugao) (Fig. 7), is funded by the Government of Japan and operated by the Provincial Government of Ifugao. Revenues from the sale of electricity produced by the facility go to the Ifugao Electric Cooperative, which funds conservation efforts to prevent further deterioration of Ifugao's World Heritage rice terraces.

While considered an example of sustainable use of river resources, the Ambangal Project, however, is not immune from scrutiny:

We have been monitoring its impacts too. Do the disadvantages outweigh the advantages? Water diversion had initially been an issue with the powerplant's intake being located on the top while farmers divert irrigation water at the bottom. But that was easily resolved. We just have to move the irrigation water intake on the top. You cannot do that easily with big projects such as SNAP's (Interview 2017a).

Another key difference between Macli-ing's dissent and the Alimit dissent is that while Macli-ing and other pangats had produced Pagta ti

<sup>10</sup> In 2012 and 2013, the Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement, the Philippine National Museum, the University of the Philippines, NCIP-Ifugao, and the University of California Los Angeles collaborated on an archaeological project in the Old Kiyangan Village (Kiangang, Ifugao) and found significant discoveries about Ifugao Indigenous Peoples' pre-colonial lives [96].



Fig. 7. The 200-kW Ambangal micro-hydropower project in Kiangán, Ifugao (Photographed by the author, November 2017).

Bodong to register their united opposition, the dissent against SNAP's Alimit Project appeared to be splintered. In fact, there had been no similarly produced pact of alliances across various Ifugao Indigenous Peoples. The history of these peoples is instructive of the observed fragmentation as one respondent notes:

If you look at the history of the tribes, the Tuwalis, who bent to the Americans first,<sup>11</sup> were the ones given positions in government. They were first to be “educated”...(whereas) the Ayangan people, they just moved out. They resisted the Americans. They were not colonized as fast, so they are not educated as fast. Their land, if you look at the roads, these are all muddy. Compare that to the Tuwalis', where all the national roads can be found (Informant 2).

Differences notwithstanding, the legacy of these Indigenous Peoples-produced energyscape narratives in Cordillera is found in their power as anchors for mobilizing large-scale support against unjust energy development. As these narratives are evoked in present-day social movements—such as the case in the anti-Alimit dam project—other evidence can be found on the capacity of these narratives to travel beyond Cordillera to shape “other” Philippine energyscape. As new sites of contested energy development emerge, Indigenous People-led mobilizations have continued to speak truth to power, especially against the Duterte Government's three Chico River mega dam projects<sup>12</sup> [90,

<sup>11</sup> The Tuwalis were the first to yield to the Americans during the Ifugao leg of their occupation of the Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> The facilities—including in the first basket of China-funded infrastructure projects in the Philippines—include a 52-MW pump irrigation project that would use 100 hectares of Tabuk (Kalinga) lands [97, 98].

91]—the very river that Macli-ing shed his blood for—and the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project<sup>13</sup> [92].

These examples are but two of the many Indigenous Peoples' domain-encroaching projects in the Duterte's *Build Build Build* program.<sup>14</sup> With Duterte using Marcos' militarization playbook to suppress anti-dam dissent in indigenous lands and in the absence of international surveillance of human rights violations, defending these lands has become life-and-death struggles. As more large-scale energy development projects infiltrate Indigenous Peoples' communities, a respondent from a national coalition of Indigenous Peoples organizations in the Philippines, warned:

The Marcos Government killed Macli-ing, but the Aquino Government also killed 129. And so was the Duterte Government, which, in addition to extra judicial killings in the drug issue, has after only one and a half years in power, killed 32 Indigenous Peoples. As project development in Indigenous Peoples' communities becomes more aggressive, we expect more killings of Indigenous Peoples (Informant 3).

## 7. Conclusion

The Indigenous Peoples' narratives of dissent observed in Macli-ing Dulag's bravery to speak truth to power (which eventually led to his assassination), the use of performative gestures (as shown for example by older women performing *lusa*), and the *Pagta ti Bodong* (that Macli-ing, alongside other Cordilleran pagtas had produced as a testament of the importance of alliances to strengthen opposition) not only provide motivations for future mobilizations but also fill in key gaps in the literature of indigenous dissent produced by uncolonized peoples in understudied locations such as the Philippine Cordillera. These narratives, this paper has shown, built a strong sense of identity for the Indigenous Peoples of Cordillera, who, for the first time, were unified to influence their energyscape. At the same time, these mobilization narratives have become more relevant in informing present-day mobilizations against similarly positioned and equally powerful agents and forces of state and capital encroaching Indigenous Peoples' domains. However, we also see—from present-day anti-Alimit River dam dissent—some emergent mobilization tactics distinct from those of Macli-ing's: exposing the tarnished record of the FPIC process, exposing company track-records, and supporting prefigurative projects as alternatives to large dams. While there are divergences in historical and present-day dissent, what is certain—as this paper shows—is that as long as these development projects fail to embed concepts of justice [93] in the making of an energyscape, Indigenous Peoples' struggles to speak truth to power are also poised to continue.

## Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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<sup>13</sup> The Project, which will involve the construction of the China-funded Kaliwa Dam in Tanay municipality in Rizal province and a water supply tunnel to ease the demand on Angat Dam, Manila's only water storage facility [99], will inundate Dumagat and Remontado lands in Tanay and General Nakar in Quezon province [100]. The Project will also affect biodiversity in some 12,000 hectares of Sierra Madre forests, one of the Philippines' most biodiverse areas and largest remaining rainforests [99, 101].

<sup>14</sup> The Duterte Government's *Build Build Build* Program seeks to accelerate infrastructure spending in new railway systems, bridges, roads, and expressways.



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## Appendix A: Profiles of key informants

Informant 1	Adult, male respondent from Kiangnan, Ifugao, with postgraduate degree from the University of the Philippines, an Indigenous Person, and who had, at the time of the interview, led a grassroots, non-government, non-profit, local organization, based in Ifugao, aimed to conserve the heritage of the Ifugao peoples through advocacy for Indigenous Peoples' rights, educational programs, and rural development. Interview lasted for 1.5 h.
Informant 2	Adult, female respondent from Lagawe, Ifugao, an Indigenous Person, and who had, at the time of the interview, led a local, rights-based, non-government farmers' group. Interview lasted for 1.5 h.
Informant 3	Adult, female respondent from Quezon City, Metro Manila, and was, at the time of the interview, an officer of a national coalition of Indigenous Peoples' organizations in the Philippines. Interview lasted for 1 hour.
Informant 4, Mr. Brandon Lee	Adult, male respondent, from California, USA, but has settled in Lagawe, Ifugao for more than ten years—having married an Indigenous Person and raising a family—and was, at the time of the interview, the Human Rights Coordinator of the Ifugao Peasants Movement. Interview lasted for 1.5 h.

## Appendix B: Interview guide and key discussion themes

- 1 Please describe your work.
- 2 If you work in an institution or organization, please briefly describe this organization and what it does.
- 3 What energy resources and systems are present in Ifugao?
- 4 What is your personal and your group's or organization's position towards and perceptions about hydropower development and energy companies in Ifugao?
- 5 What is the status of local dissent against hydropower development in Ifugao?
- 6 How do you see a just energy transition in Ifugao?

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