Constructing Reconstruction: Governmentality in Post-Disaster Intervention in the Philippines

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Questions

• 1. How does the state construct the dangers of the environment and how does it deploy this knowledge to the population? Is there continuity with the in the forms of governmentality in pre-Yolanda and post-Yolanda Tacloban?

• 2. What are the technologies of government deployed in the government of target populations in post-Haiyan Tacloban?

• 3. What forms of subjectivities are enabled in the post-disaster city and how are these subjectivities activated?

Locating the Field

• Population as of 2010: 221,174
• Geophysical Hazards: liquefaction, coastal and slope erosion, floods, storm surges and tsunamis
• Major fault lines in the region: Philippine Fault Zone; Philippine Trench
• Why Tacloban? 2,671 unidentified deaths were recorded in the city - accounts for 42% of the 6,293 casualties (NDRRMC 2014)
Literature Review (Main Trends)

• Expansion of neoliberalism in disaster affected areas; “Disaster Capitalism” (state-facilitated or civil society led – Driscoll-Derrickson 2013, 2011; Gunewardena and Schuller 2008; Klein 2007; Bello 2006; Pandya 2006)

GAP

• Unitary conception of state and power within the state
• Lack of discussion on rationales guiding state action
• Lack of analysis of micropractices of state power – for example, how is neoliberalism enacted through everyday practices of disaster mitigation?
• Minimal discussion on formation of subjectivities in the aftermath of a disaster (but see Kruks-Wisner 2011 for exemption)
Theoretical Engagement

• Governmentality – “The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this ...form of power, which as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security” (Foucault 1991:102)

• “...any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through...desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes.”(Dean 2010:18).
Definition of Terms

- **Rationalities of Government** – “the language and vocabulary of political rule, the constitution of manageable fields and objects and the variable forms of truth, knowledge and expertise that authorize governmental practice (Inda 2005: 7-8)

- Technologies of government – “the domain of practical mechanisms, devices, calculations, procedures, apparatuses, and documents...that endeavors to translate thought into practice and thus actualize political reasons (Inda 2005: 9)
Subjects of Government – “the diverse types of selves, persons, actors, agents or identities that arise from and inform governmental activity” (Inda 2005: 10)

“Focus on the governmental practices and programs that seek to cultivate particular types of individual and collective identity as well as forms of agency and subjectivity” (Inda 2005: 10)

Fields of visibility - what kinds of objects and subjects are rendered visible and what are ignored under a particular governmental activity (Dean 2010: 41)

Methods for Data Collection

• Document Analysis
• In-depth interviews
• Participant observation
Rationalities of Government

• “Ecological Modernisation”
• “Bourgeois Environmentalism”
• Neoliberalization of subject formation

Ecological Modernization

• “the compatibility of economic growth and environmental protection, a liberal market order, and sustainable development (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006: 52)
• “gradual transformation of the state and market to promote green regulation, technology, investment and trade” (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006: 53)
• “capitalism and industrialization can be made more environmentally friendly” (Ibid)
Ecological Modernization

- Promotion of the concept of environmental sustainability:
  “Recovery and rehabilitation programs should be undertaken in ways that do not harm the health and functioning of the natural environment; and consider how to address global environmental issues such as climate change and resource scarcity. The rebuilding and enhancement of Tacloban’s infrastructure and buildings also opens up a significant opportunity to solve several issues, such as solid waste and wastewater management; design the city structure to adapt to changes in natural systems; and improve the natural environment. There are opportunities to re-establish or increase the extent of mangroves, wetlands, and to rehabilitate river banks” (TRRP, p. 23)

Ecological Modernization

- “The natural assets of Tacloban not only contribute to the livability (quality of life) of the city; these can also be used to spur economic activity. A sensitive and sustainable treatment of the natural environment will not only increase potential industries in the city but it will also help to mitigate the effects of natural calamities” (TRRP, p. 15)
Ecological Modernization

- The recovery and rehabilitation process outlined in the TRRP is an “inclusive and holistic” process that aims to promote “socially, environmentally, economically and culturally balanced redevelopment” by utilizing the recovery and reconstruction process as an “opportunity” for improving the system in the city (TRRP, p.5).

Bourgeoisie Environmentalism

- A form of rationality that highlights the importance of upper-class concerns around aesthetics, leisure, safety, and health, eventually shaping the contours of urban space (Baviskar 2003)
- A hierarchical form of urban environmental citizenship that “seeks to erase the ‘polluting’ poor from the space of the city” (Doshi 2014)
- “Notions of cleanliness, sanitation, and order often play a role in these debates.” (McFarlane 2008)
Pre-Yolanda

- The proliferation of informal settlements can cause many problems such as inadequate facilities like roads, water, electricity, and no security of tenure, poor health and sanitation (CLUP 2013-2022 (Vol 3) p. 122)

- “Informal settlers occupy residential spaces including agricultural plots in the forestland area.” (CLUP 2013-2022, Vol 1, p. 196)

- “The foreshore areas, (along Cancabato, Anibong and Panalaron Bays) are continuously being occupied as informal settlement areas. Its density is constantly growing and swelling to an uncontrolled proportion overrunning a sizeable area of the bay as the foreshore portion and dried up area has been used for residential structures” (CLUP 2013-2022, Vol. 1, p. 162)

- “Of the 4 bays of Tacloban, Cancabato Bay is heavily silted with structures of informal settlers. A number of formal settlers in the guise of foreshore lease and miscellaneous sales agreements with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources formalize their hold on the area. This situation is the most problematic because with the condition it can easily take only about five decades to erase the Cancabato Bay from the map and in the process convert it into part of the mass land joining in part the San Jose Peninsula with the Sagkahan shoreline.” (CLUP 2013-2022, Vol. 1, p. 166)
Informal settlers as damaging to environment

- “Many of the experts agree that the need for shore protection is necessary. The infrastructure itself and the people need to be protected when events such as Super Typhoon Yolanda revisit this area. For one, the supposedly non-buildable and non-alienable buffer zones have become host to commercial activities and informal settlers. These existing buffers of Tacloban consist of river easements, shoreline legal easements and mangrove forest. And with the storm surge and strong winds unleashed by the supertyphoon Yolanda, coastal zones were flattened to ground zero” (TRRP, p. 49)

Informal settlers causing pollution

- “Tacloban City does not have waste water treatment plants. Currently waste water is discharged first in canals which lead straight to waterways. The city also lack septage treatment facilities and sludge is discharged only in septic tanks, or directly to waterways especially in informal settlement areas.” (TRRP Environmental Report, p. 8)
Yolanda as an opportunity to clean the city

- “We were already planning on clearing the coastal areas so that the number of informal settlers would be lessened. We did not pray for Yolanda but it was what paved the way so that the lots in the North will be used and slowly, we can clean the seaside areas” (CHCDO officer, personal interview, 2015)

“Will to Protect”

- “In the rehab now, we’re in the policy making now, our job right now is to ensure that the tragedy were so many people died will not happen again. Because that (policy) is something that we can control but the typhoon is something that we can’t control. So it is ensuring that the people who are living in danger zones are relocated to safer areas.” (Vice Mayor Jerry “Sambo” Yaokasin, Interview with the author, 2015).
Exclusion as means for safety

• “You need to understand, if you are living in an unsafe area, you will not receive ESA. You should ask the national agency [about this guidelines]. Because if we are going to give money to those who are living in unsafe areas, then they will return to these danger zones, they will die again because these areas are already unsafe. If we will give money to those in unsafe areas, it will be very difficult [ ] Why? Because these are already unsafe area, why would you return there? That's why you should not be in unsafe areas, you should be in safe areas” (CSWDO officer, public forum, 2015)

Resettlement in order to Save

• “So, as our last speaker mentioned, we need to be located in safe zones. I think majority [are] from Tacloban right? And we all experienced Yolanda. Definitely, our strategy as the city government is that we are building new communities in the safe zone.” (CHCDO officer, public forum, 2015)
Technologies of Government

- Land Use Planning – improved environment and economic gains due to the rational allocation of land for suitable purposes
- Creation of Buffer Zones
  - Juridical Basis
  - Mapping Techniques
  - Survey Instruments
Neoliberalization of Subjectivities

- As a cultural system, neoliberalism aims to structure society and individuals according to the norms and rationality that develop “self-responsibility” “self-help” “self-activation” “self-monitoring” “audit” and accountability” (see Koki 2010)
- The creation of “self-responsible” subjects for which the burden of responsibility is transferred from the state into individuals (Lemke 2001)
- Rational subject – assess the costs and benefits of particular courses of action (Lemke 2001)

Problematic subjects

- Irresponsible behavior
- Engaged in anti-social behavior
- Need to reform their habits
Entrepreneurial subject

- “Regarding livelihood, this is what I am proud of in our transitional sites, we have 9 sites...we have a savings program and we have values formation...this 40 families, do you know how much they have saved? 200,000 pesos...And in the [another site], they have 50,000, in Cali they have 65,000 they are just saving around 20-30 pesos per week. We can say that we are starting to empower them. It is not an excuse that just because you are in a transition shelter, you don't have money, 40 families have 200,000 pesos already” (CHCDO officer, public forum, 2015)

Creating a Calculative Rationality

- “I: So in the absence of ESA, what is the assistance that will be extended to the---
- “A: Resettlement, that is worth more than the ESA (30,000) it is a housing unit worth 290,000. House and Lot. It is even better for them since they will not be left behind, if they are already there, they will not only receive housing since there is a convergence of programs and services to be implemented” (Social Worker, interview, 2015)
“The problem with people, especially those that participate in rallies, they want money. I tell them that if I am not qualified [for the ESA], I would prefer to be resettled, I will get a bigger value. You want 30,000 can you build a house with 30,000 pesos? No. Some of them, they want money, it is still a problem of attitudes.” (Social Worker, personal interview, 2015)

Self-Responsibility

“Now, in resettlement sites, in temporary sties, we are encouraging them to engage in these savings program in preparation for [payment] of water [services]. Currently, our water is being delivered to the resettlement sites, we are preparing them for the eventuality that these water delivery services will be paid for because if we only rely on the funds of the city, [it will be strained] since there are a lot of delivery trips” (CHCDO officer, personal interview, 2015)
Self-Responsibility

- [We don't know] the policy that they will hand down to us regarding the payment scheme but there is definitely going to be one, let us not settle for free housing because if it is free, we will not work hard. It is better if we work hard [sweat] for it, there is a counterpart from us. (NHA Officer, public forum, 2015)

Conclusion

- Integration of Ecological Modernization and Bourgeoisie Environmentalism as rationalities that structure how urban land and those that occupy it are governed (and disciplined)
- The process of the creation of neoliberal subjectivities in the City of Tacloban through different programs targeted at different sites and scales
References:
