Beyond Partying: Characterizing the LGBTQ Movement in the Philippines

John Andrew G. Evangelista

Abstract

Accounts about LGBTQ organizing in the Philippines, so far, focused on specific organizations like *Ang Ladlad* among others. Because of such focus, they fail to unpack the concept of LGBTQ movement. This paper fills this gap by providing historical overview of LGBTQ organizing in the country to reveal its various characteristics. Using oral accounts from seventeen (17) LGBTQ activists, this article argues the presence of an LGBTQ movement in the country. I deploy and interrogate the conceptual dichotomy between old and new social movements. The article not only unequivocally concludes that there is an LGBTQ movement in the Philippines. More importantly, this movement muddles the distinction between the old and the new.

Keywords: LGBTQ, social movement, Philippines, Pride March

Introduction

Early into my research about the history of LGBTQ politics, two colleagues challenged me to prove the existence of an LGBTQ movement in the country. Both of them doubted the political character of Metro Manila Pride March (MMPM). They see it as a carnivalesque parade meant to entertain rather than a political action meant to engage the state. In retrospect, this notion is understandable. Popular news coverage about MMPM highlight flamboyant costumes and colorfully decorated floats, sometimes, at the expense of its political causes. These popular images do not readily render the march as a form of political action.

Contrary to these popular notions, activists in the Philippines attach the term "movement" to LGBTQ in reference to the broad list of organizations carrying LGBTQ causes. Thus, they use the term interchangeably with "LGBTQ community". Although they lack conceptual clarity, these broad usages play into the community's yearning for political and social recognition. Deploying the term "movement" in reference to a diverse LGBTQ community helps activists present and project an image of a community unified by a shared identity. In so doing, these usages aid them to claim their legitimate position within civil society as worthy of political actors.

While I recognize the instrumentality of these broad discursive deployments, I assert the need to tease out the concept of social movement to clarify what may properly be labeled as one. To do this, I lay down a tentative yet broad history of LGBTQ organizing in the country to reveal collective efforts to create better social conditions for sexual and gender minorities. I further the analytical trajectory by unpacking whether this collective action could be conceptualized as a social movement. Finally, I provide insights on the general characteristics of this movement by interrogating the dichotomy between old and new social movements.

To fulfill my task in this article, I draw narratives and insights from my unpublished master's thesis (Evangelista 2017a). From May 2015 to January 2016, I participated in various

events to familiarize myself with the movement. I also joined Task Force Pride (TFP) during the preparation for the 2015 MMPM and interviewed seventeen (17) movement leaders. They were given freedom to narrate experiences they deem important. For one to two hours each, narrators shared with me their political socialization, the challenges they face, their understanding of LGBTQ issues, and their participation in landmark events. With their permission, interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed to facilitate my thematic analysis.

Conceptualizing Social Movements

It is no secret, at least for those who studied collective actions, that social movements are dynamic historical events. Partly due to their dynamism, social movements are defined in different ways. While some classic definitions view social movement as a "collectivity" of actors (Melucci, 1989, p. 29; Turner & Killian, 1987, p. 223), others stress that it is a "set of opinions and beliefs" (McCarthy and Zald, 1977, p. 1217). Yet others recognize that movement is either a kind of interaction (Tarrow, 2011; Tilly, 1984) or collective behavior (Touraine, 1981).

Amidst these differences, Diani (1992) successfully integrates fundamental elements found in a variety of classic definitions. He identifies four: networks of informal interactions, collective identity, shared beliefs, and contentious actions. He integrates these elements by defining social movements as "a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani, 1992, p. 13).

Social movements, for Diani (1992), are networks of informal interactions. Although many social movement organizations are bureaucratic, the interactions among them are rather lose or informal yet are crucial to the allocation of resources and generation of claims (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 2005). Ideological frames meant to produce cohesive, yet novel understandings of issues are critical both in generating shared beliefs and in sustaining solidarity among movement

organizations (Brown-Saracino & Ghaziani, 2009; Van Dyke, 2006; Estenberg, 1992; Benford & Snow, 2000; Melucci, 1989).

While movements generally traversed both conventional and unconventional actions, scholars debate the appropriate sites of contentions (Diani 1992). For some, movements seek control over historicity, which is the "overall systems of meaning" in society (Touraine, 1981, p. 81; Inglehart, 1990; Dalton, Kuechler & Burklin, 1990; Melucci, 1989; Cohen, 1985). Yet others include forms of collective actions that do not necessarily seek to change fundamental characteristics of status quo (Tarrow, 2011; Politick, 1990; Brandt, 1989; Tilly, 1984; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). For Diani (1992), the sites of actions are not elementary features of social movements rather they are categories used to distinguish various types.

Interrogating these classic definitions, Edwards (2014) reflects on the contemporary relevance of state-oriented actions and collective identity. Rapid globalization, she argues, shapes the emergence of collective actions that transcend the boundaries of the state. And the drastic development of new media provides vast reach for movement adherents while rendering collective identity and shared beliefs more porous than ever (Milkman, 2017). These shifts prompt particular types rather than changes in the fundamental elements making up social movements. Hence, Diani's (1992) conception of social movements remains robust.

The Distinction between the Old and the New

The 1960s witnessed the emergence of various forms of struggles that went beyond the redistribution of wealth (Melucci, 1980). These forms of collective action carried issues concerning race, gender, sexuality, and education among others. Scholars interpret these movements as unique from their predecessors. Particularly, new social movement (NSM) theories see these collective actions as irreducible to material claims instead, they argue that these are new forms of movements with unique claims and realms of contestation (Buechler, 1995). Hence, a dichotomy is made between old and new social movements.

There are three levels of distinctions. The first is made along the terrains of contentions. While old movements are seen as political, new social movements are understood as cultural (Fadaee, 2011; Hourigan, 2001; Buechler, 1995; Inglehart, 1990; Dalton, Kuechler & Burklin, 1990; Offe, 1987). The former aims to grab state power while the latter contests the "overall system of meaning in a given society" (Touraine, 1981, p. 81). Tarrow (1991) sharply engages this dichotomy by asserting that all social movements are compelled to culturally construct shared beliefs to build solidarity, but they also rely on state-oriented actions (Plotke, 1990).

The next distinction between the old and the new lies in the values that become the basis of claims (Faddae, 2011; Hourigan, 2001; Buechler, 1995; Inglehart, 1990; Dalton, Kuechler & Burklin, 1990; Offe, 1990). The former revolves on wealth redistribution that requires grabbing state power while the latter is engage in cultural contestation to foreground post-material values like identities and autonomy (Johnston, Larana, & Gusfield, 1994). Buechler (1995) accuses NSM theories of fetishizing the uniqueness of NSMs rather than understanding their organizational and ideological relationship with old movements.

Finally, a dichotomy is made between the constituencies of each type of collective action. Unlike old proletarian movements whose constituents are structurally and materially situated, new movements lack staple constituents (Van and Klandermans, 2009; Stoecker, 1995; Klandermans, 1992; Melucci, 1989; Touraine, 1981). Hence, they attempt to create more inclusive and democratic spaces of decision-making to account the diversity of their constituents (Milkman, 2017). Criticisms leveled against this dichotomy targets the proclamation that class no longer plays crucial role in contemporary contentious politics (Eggert & Giugni, 2015; Barker and Dale, 1998).

LGBTQ Movements as New

In recent decades, LGBTQ movements around the world have been gaining the attention of scholars seeking to

understand the conditions within which claims are made, the mechanisms through which collective identities emerge, and the internal procedures of decision-making (Parado & Machado, 2014; McFarland-Bruce, 2013; Joseph, 2010; Gruszczynska, 2009; Enguix, 2009; Browne, 2006; Brown-Saracino & Ghaziani, 2009; Van Dyke, 2006; Mudu, 2002; Ward, 2003; Kates & Belk, 2001; Bernstein, 1997; Estenberg, 1992). Many of these accounts situate LGBTQ movements within the historical and social conditions they find themselves in (Armstong & Crage, 2006; D'Emilio, 2002).

Several crucial insights could be culled from these accounts. First, LGBTQ movements are primarily understood as struggles associated with identities. Their claims are linked with autonomy and identity politics. Moreover, the tactics within these movements are labelled as cultural. Dragging and partying are seen as ways to contest the hetero-patriarchal construction of gender and sexuality. Finally, state-oriented claims and tactics are seen as mere instruments of self-expression and autonomy. In general, LGBTQ movements are implicitly framed as part of the family of new social movements.

Scholars focusing on Philippines demonstrate how LGBTQ organizations in the country seek to contest discourses of gender and sexuality through public identity performances (Soriano & Cao, 2016; Cardozo, 2014; Coloma, 2013; Soriano, 2012; Thoreson, 2012; Pineda, 2001). These works frame the movement as primarily cultural. Accounts on Metro Manila Pride March foreground the goals of contesting hiya resulting from the patriarchal and heteronormative conception of gender and sexuality (Soriano & Cao, 2016; Thoreson, 2012). Hence, the implicit assumption about the centrality of identity politics is carried even with works accounting for the LGBTQ movement in the Philippines.

Furthermore, accounts on LGBTQ identities in the Philippines illustrate fractures resulting from racialized/colonialized identities (Manalansan, 1997; Garcia, 1994), gendered discourses (Garcia, 1994), and class positions (Manalansan, 1997; Tan 1995). The reality of these fractures compels LGBTQ organizations to negotiate volatile collective

identities and diverse ideological frames (Evangelista, 2017a; 2017b; Soriano, 2012; Ofreneo & Casal de Vela, 2010). Efforts to contend with diverse frames and to build collective identities are situated within specific social conditions of post-1986 Philippines (Thoreson, 2012). Hence, the fractures within the LGBTQ constituents in the Philippines demonstrate that class remains an important axis of divides within the community.

As promising as these insights are, there is an aversion to use the concept of social movements among scholars focusing on the Philippines. Also, the current conversations understand LGBTQ movements as hinged on identity claims. Much focus is directed at illustrating how these movements launch cultural contentions, hence, rendering LGBTQ collective actions as new rather than old. I engage this current conversation not only by proving that there is a collective action that could be properly called LGBTQ movement in the country. More importantly, I hope to demonstrate how this movement conflates the old and the new.

Networks of Informal Interaction

After the demise of the Marcos authoritarian regime in 1986, there was a sense of freedom brought by the resumption of legal civil society (Encarnacion Tadem, 2005). For LGBTQ activists, this seemingly new atmosphere provided spaces to explore activism on the basis of gender and sexual issues (Evangelista, 2017b). As Endik (founding member of PROGAY Philippines) put it, "*Nagkaroon ng level ng tolerance*" (There was a level of tolerance). The democratization after the 1986 People Power provided fertile grounds where LGBTQ organizations started to assemble.

Accompanying an opening of civil society is an ideological split in the Left (Encarnacion Tadem, 2005). 'National democrats' or Reaffirmist (RA) affirm the Maoist tactic of revolution from the countryside while 'social democrats' or Rejectionist (RJ) experimented with electoral and formal participatory politics. This split permeated in different social movements including the LGBTQ movement. As one narrator with RJ leaning described

the atmosphere, "*Mayroon kang mga RA – the Makabayan Block. Mayroon kang RJ – Akbayan*" (There is RA — the Makabayan Block. There is also the RJ — Akbayan).

Within these political openings and ideological fragmentations, LGBTQ organizations emerged in various segments of the Left since the early 1990s. On the national democratic segment, PROGAY Philippines was formed utilizing networks of youth and labor organizations in the early 1990s. On the other side, UP Babaylan emerged as a student organization based at the University of the Philippines Diliman around the same time. Although not a formal member of any organization, Babaylan chooses to ally with social democrats like Akbayan as the split becomes pronounced in student politics.

Within the women's movement, a network known as The Lesbian Collective was formed in the early 1990s. The collective eventually split into two other organizations — Womyn Supporting Womyn in Crisis (WSWC) and Can't Live in the Closet (CLIC) in 1992. Due to some personal differences, a segment of CLIC eventually split to form Lesbian Advocacy/ Activism Project of the Philippines (LEAP Philippines). These organizations share membership overlap with women's organizations and networks.

Other organizations carrying LGBTQ causes as part of their agenda were formed within HIV-AIDS advocacy networks like Reach Out Foundation (ROF) and The Library Foundation (TLF) since the early 1990s. Also, religious sects open to sexual diversity like Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) were instituted around the same time. More organizations were formed as the years passed by. In a report by the United Nations Development Program and the United States Agency of International Development (2014), forty (40) LGBTQ organizations in the country were listed.

There were several efforts to sustain interaction among LGBTQ organizations. In 1994, PROGAY Philippines and Metropolitan Community Church conducted a protest. The preparation for this march entailed intense discussions. As

Allan (founding member of PROGAY Philippines) described it, *"Pukpukan talaga sa teorya ang mga bakla"* (Gay men are intense when it comes to theoretical discussions). Although most of PROGAY members shared socialist principles, decisions about the proper form of protest required intense deliberation to build consensus (Evangelista 2017a; 2017b). This is why, as Allan furthered, *"Iisa ang boses 'pag nagsalita"* (We have one clear voice when we protest).

According to Murphy, PROGAY and MCC invited other organizations. Many organizations did not join because they felt excluded. As one gay activist said, *"Sila-sila lang naman 'yan"* (That protest only included them). This particular march is controversial within the movement because while some view it as the first Pride March in the country, some question this claim (Evangelista 2017a; 2017b). The tension partly results from the perceived exclusive character of the process of decision-making. PROGAY took the lead in deciding the form and the campaign of the march without, as other narrators put it, consulting other organizations.

The following year, PROGAY was not able to organize another march because most of its members were recalled by their original leftist organizations to mobilize in other basic sectors (Evangelista, 2017a; 2017b). Reach Out Foundation (ROF), an HIV/AIDS advocacy group, decided to take the lead role in organizing the Manila Pride from 1996 to 1998. With more than enough resources from international and local funding agencies, ROF not only allocated money for the march. It also took on the role as primary decision-maker in the preparation for Pride.

Unlike the 1994 March, Prides led by ROF were well attended by more organizations. Aside from PROGAY Philippines, organizations like CLIC, UP Babaylan, WSWC, Katlo and many others joined not just the march but also the organizing committee. Pride was no longer just accessible to militant activists rather it became more inclusive as it exuded a celebratory ambiance during these years. This, according to Jomar Fleras (former Executive Director of Reach Out Foundation), encouraged the wider participation of the community. In his

words, "*'yong sa amin ang unang pinaka-broad ang participation*" (Ours was the first broadly participated march).

One gay activist describes the way decisions were made during the years of ROF-led Prides as "not exactly democratic". Although ROF invited other organizations to participate, it remained dominant in making decisions while other organizations were relegated to logistical functions. Telly and others accepted this informal organizational structure since the foundation was funding the parade during those years. In his words, "*Dedma na kasi may funding sila*" (We did not mind because they had funding). However, the decline in its funding support necessitated ROF to relinquish its lead role in organizing the annual parade in 1999.

In 1998, Akbayan Action Party won a congressional seat under the party-list elections. Ferdie (board member of TLF) remembered the impact of this electoral victory. With the LGBTQ community as one of the bases of its political support, the party consulted various organizations to craft clear legislative agenda. To respond to this political opportunity, UP Babaylan and other organizations facilitated series of workshops to foster a dialogue among LGBTQ organizations. Telly remembered how these workshops helped build two important networks in the late 1990s:

> *And so 'yong nagbunga noon, isa sa mga consequence noong series of congress na 'yon is Lagablab. And because the networks were formed, the networks were established, it became easier to organize coalitions like the Task Force Pride.*
>
> (The fruit of this congress is LAGABLAB. And because networks were formed and established, it became easier to organize coalitions like Task Force Pride.)

LAGABLAB is a legislative arm lobbying for laws while Task Force Pride is the street arm organizing the annual march when ROF relinquished its lead role in 1999. As such, it organizes campaign events, forums, and fund-raising activities where various organizations found themselves interacting with each

other. Ging (former TFP convener) and Danton (founding Chair of Ang Ladlad) remember quite joyously the fun times they had while organizing these events in the early 2000s.

Both networks seek to create inclusive spaces where interactions among adherents could be sustained. To avoid the dominance of a particular segment, issues are resolved through deliberative discussions geared towards building consensus. Ging admits that discussions are heated but they were necessary to affirm members' commitment to organizational decisions. Ivanka (former TFP convener) recalled that, "*Actually 'yong mga madudugong discussions 'yong pagcome-up sa themes*" (The real intense discussions are those about coming up with themes). Like Ging, she saw the deliberative process as a way to build consensus despite diverse opinions.

Despite attempts at inclusion, organizational factors constitute volatile participation. For instance, the lack of manpower configures precarious participation. Ivanka recalls years when there were only three active members of TFP. And as many narrators recounted, LAGABLAB was inactive for several years due to lack of manpower. Many adherents fulfill multiple tasks due to membership overlaps, which sometimes lead to withdrawal from participation because of fatigue. In recent years, TFP opened its membership to volunteers who were unaffiliated. This decision seeks to address attrition.

Aside from withdrawal, these networks also face serious financial challenges. Since ROF withdrew as the financier of Pride, TFP/MMPM currently relies on donations from member-organizations, allies, private businesses, and individuals to sustain the annual parade. In the case of LAGABLAB, organizations' willingness to allocate resources facilitated the revival of the previously inactive network in recent years. Despite these organizational challenges, these two networks continue to provide spaces where interactions among LGBTQ organizations are sought to be maintained.

Those networks from different segments of civil society are crucial to the formation of LGBTQ organizations and

networks. Some organizations emerged within the national democratic segment while others found allies within social democratic organizations like Akbayan. Yet others were founded within women's, religious, and HIV-AIDS networks. LGBTQ organizations' interaction were not limited to identity-based organizations but extended to leftist organizations anchored on material claims. Hence, the emergence of these organizations demonstrates Buechler's (1995) insights about the dynamic interaction between social movements deemed as new and those deemed as old.

The sheer number of organizations is not enough to satisfy the first element of a social movement. Crucial are those networks of sustained interactions. The partnership between PROGAY and MCC's at the 1994 March, the broad coalition initiated by ROF from 1996 to 1998, and the emergence of LAGABLAB and TFP in the late 1990s indicate efforts to sustain such interactions. Although these networks face issues of funding and withdrawal, there are efforts to organize decision-making processes as deliberative and inclusive as possible. These networks demonstrate the first element of Diani's (1992) conception of social movements because they facilitate informal yet sustained interaction among movement actors.

Characterizing Constituents

To assume that social movements are unified fields of collective actions is to dismiss the cleavages constantly plaguing their constituencies. In the context of new social movements, these cleavages present themselves in the form of diverse identities (Van and Kandermans, 2009; Stoecker, 1995; Klandermans, 1991; Melucci, 1989; Touraine, 1981). Adherents understand the complex character of cleavages permeating within the LGBTQ community in various ways. For most of them, class is an important axis configuring hierarchies within the community. As Endik (founding member PROGAY Philippines) attested:

> *Mayroon kang discrimination kasi doon sa community nag-eexist 'yong class, 'di ba? 'Yong class issue nandoon*

sa loob ng community – may mayaman at mahirap na LGBTs.

(There is discrimination because the class divide exists inside the community, right? Class issue permeates in the community – there are wealthy and there are poor LGBTs.)

Many narrators draw sharp comparison between LGBTQ celebrities and those from impoverished conditions. Some recount stories of poor gays and lesbians who had to withdraw from school because of poverty. According to one narrator, LGBTQs become formidable candidates to make the sacrifice of leaving school because, unlike their heterosexual siblings, they are not expected to form and support their own families in the future. Aside from class, gender also provides adherents lens to understand the diversity of LGBTQ constituents. As Jomar insisted:

You cannot be discriminatory kasi discrimination happens even within the community. Kapag parlorista ka people will frown on you like, 'yong mga muscle boys [paminta].

(You cannot be discriminatory. Discrimination even happens within the community. If you are a parlorista, people will frown on you, especially the muscle boys [paminta].)

Parlorista is a local term pejoratively used to refer to feminine gay men. Pa-men (literally, to pretend to be masculine) and, its evolved version, *paminta* (literally, pepper), imply that masculine gay identity is fake and could be smelled from afar like pepper. Ivanka observed similar machismo among lesbians. She recalled witnessing two butch lesbians almost got into a fist fight over one girl. Both examples reflect the dominant patriarchal discourse that valorizes masculinity. Complicating the understanding of these fractures, sexuality provides another frame through which adherents understand internal hierarchies. As Jade (former TFP volunteer) described:

There is still a lot of internal horizontal homophobia, biphobia, transphobia around. We always see that. Especially, I could

> *speak for gay men and bisexual men, you see a lot of bigotry pa rin even among our ranks.*
>
> (There is still a lot of internal horizontal homophobia, biphobia and transphobia around. We always see that. Especially I could speak for gay and bisexual men, you see a lot of bigotry even among our ranks.)

Murphy shared the same sentiment. He even argues that, "*Iyong 'LGBT' mismo as a term ay pagkakahati-hati na iyan*" (The term 'LGBTQ' in itself is divisive). Like class and gender, sexual division develops negative attitudes towards various sexual groups. This prompts Jade and other narrators to say that what plagues the community could not be reduced to one form of sexual discrimination. Some are homophobic yet some are biphobic and/or transphobic. This illustrates the complexity of discrimination with sexuality as the axis of division and tension.

Faced with these cleavages, adherents encourage broader movement participation. Many organizations empower poor LGBTQ individuals through mobilization skills training. Babaylanes conducts trainings among student LGBTQ organizations around the country. Bahaghari (Rainbow) recruited workers into the organization. MCC continues to present spaces for people of diverse religious creeds. TFP/MMPM recruits volunteers from diverse backgrounds. In 2018, these efforts arguably achieved some level of success when approximately 15,000 individuals from different backgrounds participated at the Metro Manila Pride March (Lago, 2018).

The ways Filipino LGBTQ adherents understand and address social cleavages engage NSM theories' insistence on the declining relevance of class in contemporary identity-based movements (Barker and Dale, 1998). Following Manalansan (1997), Garcia (1994), and Tan (1995), insights from LGBTQ adherents demonstrate the gendered, sexualized, and classed character of the fractures plaguing the movement. Organizations seek to address these fractures by encouraging movement participation through training and recruitment.

Generating Shared Beliefs

Social movements deploy novel understandings of undesirable social situations. Benford and Snow (2000) assert the relevance of collective action frames, which provide adherents understandings of social problems in terms of diagnosis and prognosis. That is, causes must be attributed to problems, and solutions must be proposed based on these attributions. Elsewhere, I describe four broad frames within the Philippine LGBTQ movement: *class frame; legal frame; consciousness frame; and intersectional frame* (Evangelista, 2017a; 2017b). The tensions within these frames pose challenges in the construction of shared beliefs within the movement.

First, the *class frame* argues that gender and sexual discrimination stems from the dominant economic arrangement in modern society. Primarily held by national democratic activists, this frame asserts that the cause of the marginalization of the LGBTQ community is the prevailing feudal and patriarchal system. As Murphy reiterated:

> *Dapat matukoy na imulat ang masa na ang kalaban ay hindi ang damdamin lang natin sa isa't isa kung 'di 'yong mas matingkad ngunit mahirap matukoy na sistemang patriyarkal at pyudalismo na nagpapanatili sa kahirapan at isang lipunang walang pangakong magandang bukas. (Murphy*)
>
> (Let's identify the cause. We should educate the base that we are not up against our feelings towards each other rather we are up against a prevalent patriarchal and feudal system that is hard to identify. This system perpetuates poverty and a social system bearing no hope for a better future.)

Like Murphy, Endik asserts that prejudice results from poverty. In his words, "*Mahirap maunawaan ang mga taong iba sa iyo kung nagugutom ka"* (It is hard to understand those who are different if you are starving). Allan asserts how transactional gay sex works within the logic of private property favoring

those who can pay and discriminating against those who cannot. Carrying Marxist ideological constructs, this frame seeks to destroy private property to aid the transitions into a socialist system that is idealized as a way to get out of heteronormativity and patriarchy.

Next, the *legal frame* foregrounds the importance of legislating laws to ensure the rights of LGBTQ people. In contrast to the previous frame, the cause it attributes to the problem of discrimination is the lack of laws protecting LGBTQ rights and welfare. Primarily held by those activists with social democratic or liberal leanings, this frame argues that the absence of laws leaves LGBTQ individuals vulnerable to various forms of discrimination and harassment. As Danton posited:

> *Implementation, 'yan ang mga problema sa batas natin. Ang constitution, sa laymen's term, framework lang 'yan. Kumbaga sa arithmetic, 'yan ang set. Ang subset ay 'yong mga laws na Anti-Discrimination Bill na wala pa at 'yong implementing rules and regulations.*
>
> (The problem lies in the proper implementation of our laws. The constitution, in laymen's term, is only a framework. It is like arithmetic; the constitution is the set. The subsets are laws and implementing rules and regulations like the Anti-Discrimination Bill that we do not have.)

The failure to implement laws for LGBTQ rights is diagnosed as a symptom of the power of the Catholic Church and other conservative churches. As Danton furthers, politicians fear losing the favor of dominant churches that promise them votes during elections. Due to this political arrangement, bills like the Anti-Discrimination Bill are taking a long time to be passed. The imagined solution within this frame is to appropriate human rights as the ideological bedrock of the struggle for LGBTQ welfare. That is, an inherent belief in the inalienable privileges that all humans deserve (see Donnelly, 2013; Walters, 1995). As one adherent argues, "Nobody can contest human rights".

So far, the first two frames attribute the problem of discrimination to the prevailing structure of Philippine society — the first to the feudal system, and the second to the structural collusion of the church and state. Providing a contrast to both frames, the *consciousness frame* locates the problem within individual subjectivities. As Ging contended:

> *Ang nag-ooppose sa atin ay mga utak ng tao hindi institutions. Ang institution binubuo lang siya ng tao. 'Pag nabago na ng utak at puso niya, kakampi 'yan.*
>
> (We [LGBTQ] are opposed by people's mind not institutions. Institutions are formed by people. If we change the hearts and minds of people, they will be allies.)

This frame views institutions as products of human prejudice. Therefore, the logical solution is gender and sexuality fair education. Some advocates conduct gender sensitivity trainings with government officials, teachers, corporate employees, and grassroots organizations among others. Deploying the language of SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression), these trainings seek to expose individuals to the fluidity and diversity of identities. Hence, SOGIE is the primary ideological construct within which this frame stands.

Lastly, the *intersectional frame* refuses to essentialize the problem of discrimination. That is, while the first three argue for a primary explanation to the problem, the diagnosis that this frame carries recognizes variety of causes. Hence, it also recognizes variety of solutions: As Trans A (transgender women activist) purported:

> *Dapat number one, intersectional 'yong pagtingin natin sa ating mga issues. Well sabi ni Audre Lorde, "We don't live on one issue lives". Layers ng issue ang kinakaharap natin.*
>
> (First and foremost, it should be intersectional. Well, as Audre Lorde said, "We don't live one issue lives". We are confronted by multi-layered issues.)

Borrowing intersectionality from feminists (Collins, 2000), this frame insists that the problem of discrimination has many causes including patriarchy, heteronormativity, capitalism, and feudalism among others. It asserts that recognizing the varying forms of intersections among these social systems sharpens the understanding of LGBTQ issues. The logical solution, then, lies not only on the structural but also on the personal spheres, not only on the dominant economic arrangement but also on the political and cultural arrangements in society.

All of these frames agree that there is discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality in society. The tension between them could be understood as a debate between social structure and human subjectivity. While the first two frames locate discrimination as a result of structural arrangements in Philippine society, the consciousness frame foregrounds the role of learned biases as the source of the problem. In contrast, the last frame refuses to zero into one explanation. The tension among these frames poses challenges to efforts meant to craft shared beliefs within the movement.

While the resolution of these tensions may not necessarily be ideal for many adherents, it is important to agree on certain issues and advocacies. When Akbayan won in congress and LAGABLAB was formed in the late 1990s to early 2000s, there was a conversation among organizations with regard to issues that needs to be prioritized. As Ging recalled:

> *'Yong iba sa amin ayaw ng gay marriage. 'Yong iba samin gusto. Ang bottomline ng agreement, dapat open siya sa gusto at basic right siya. So hindi natin pinu-push ang marriage ngayon. 'Yon munang Anti-Discrimination Bill giving lahat ng access [to services and resources].*
>
> (Some of us did not like gay marriage. Some of us wanted it. We agreed to fight for basic rights. We are not pushing for marriage now. We have to start with Anti-Discrimination Bill that would give access [to resources and services].)

The issue of marriage equality remains to be contentious even within the movement. Some see marriage as the most basic right denied from all LGBTQ individuals, hence, worthy of being prioritized. In contrast, others feel that the more pressing issue are socio-economic rights. As Chris (former TFP convener) argued, *"Siguraduhin muna natin na may work at social services ang mga bakla at tomboy bago sila magpakasal"* (Let us make sure that gays and lesbians have jobs and access to social services before they get married). Here, socio-economic rights are seen as elemental conditions that would facilitate other rights.

Despite these disputes, the current broad consensus among adherents is the Anti-Discrimination Bill (ADB) or SOGIE Equality Bill, which seeks to protect LGBTQ individuals from discrimination. It prohibits exclusion and marginalization in the delivery of basic social services, workplaces, and educational institutions. It protects the right to organize by prohibiting revocation or disbandment of organizations on the basis of SOGIE. It also mandates the state to promote gender and sexuality fair atmosphere in government agencies, schools, and other public venues by implementing trainings, workshops, and other programs.

The ADB provides a common cause the cuts across various frames. Those who subscribe to the legal frame see this as a way to protect the rights of the members of the community. While the class frame does not see this bill as the ultimate goal, it appreciates it as a way to ensure LGBTQs' socio-economic rights through the equitable distribution of social services. Those who carry the consciousness frame appreciate the bill as a way to strengthen gender and sexuality fair education crucial to the elimination of prejudice. Finally, those who carry the intersectional frame acknowledge the bill as a way to foreground the intersection of class, gender, and sexuality among other issues.

The frames within the Philippine LGBTQ movement demonstrate how adherents mesh identity claims with material values. The ADB currently stand as a shared issue among organizations. While it does not reconcile these frames, the bill contains political, economic, and identity elements that

each frame is able to foreground. This engages the old-new dichotomy in two levels. The variety of frames demonstrates, first, that the movement is not solely anchored on post-material values. Second, the consensus about ADB illustrates that wealth redistribution and the equitable delivery of social services are just as important as identity claims.

Contentious Actions

Since the early 1990s, there are already pockets of contentions. TLC fought their way through the 1992 Women's March to foreground lesbian issues. UP Babaylan first joined the UP Lantern Parade in 1992 to confront the homophobic culture in campus politics dominated by macho organizations. In 1994, PROGAY and Metropolitan Community Church protested the Value Added Tax and oil price hike along Quezon Avenue all the way to the Quezon City Memorial Circle. Although these contentious acts did not include broad networks, they are important prototypes of LGBTQ protests in the country.

Recent forms of contentious collective actions are facilitated through LAGABLAB and Task Force Pride/Metro Manila Pride. While coordinated, these networks work in different levels of activism. The former is engaged in legislative lobbying while the second is engaged in street demonstration by organizing the annual Pride. As such, they illustrate very distinct forms of contentious actions. While Pride carries a celebratory yet militant tone, legislative lobbying requires negotiations with politicians. Understandably, this difference is partly brought about by the different characteristics of the field each network is engaged in.

LAGABLAB employs negotiating tactics that appear friendly to adversaries. Members of the network visit legislators especially those who oppose the SOGIE bill in their offices. They would give them cakes, rainbow flags, and flowers among others. While these tactics seem less confrontational, they are implicitly contentious. Through these acts, adherents reveal that adversaries willingly ignore the rights of a well-meaning sector who seeks order not aggression, co-existence not division,

rational negotiations not militant confrontations. In doing so, they are able to draw a sharp line that puts the network in a good light while exposing the lack of sympathy of those who continue to oppose the bill.

Understanding legislation as a game of numbers, adherents appropriated less confrontational tactics of contention. As one adherent said, *"Baka matalo tayo bago pa man magsimula kung ra-ra-ra agad"* (We might end up losing even before we start fighting if we begin militant right away). To garner the support of as many legislators as possible, LAGABLAB deploys tactics that encourage adversaries to dialogue with the network rather than those confrontational tactics that, in their view, will turn legislators off. This reveals that working within the boundaries of legislation constitute conditions suitable for particular forms of contestations.

The Metro Manila Pride March is a different related realm. It is arguably the most sustained form of collective contention. Since the mid 1990s, it has provided annual venue to display various claims. In recent years, it has spread across major cities like Baguio, Cebu, Tacloban, and Cagayan de Oro among others. Studies found that there are two main purposes associated with Pride March. It provides spaces to publicly declare various claims and avenues to recruit new movement adherents (Parado & Machado, 2014; McFarland-Bruce, 2013; Joseph, 2010; Gruszczynska, 2009; Enguix, 2009; Browne, 2006; Brown-Saracino & Ghaziani, 2009; Van Dyke, 2006; Mudu, 2002; Ward, 2003; Kates & Belk, 2001).

To fulfill these purposes, activists debate over the appropriate and strategic characteristic—carnivalesque or militant—Pride should assume (Parado & Machado, 2014; McFarland-Bruce, 2013; Joseph, 2010; Gruszczynska, 2009; Enguix, 2009; Browne, 2006; Brown-Saracino & Ghaziani, 2009; Van Dyke, 2006; Mudu, 2002; Ward, 2003; Kates & Belk, 2001). I found that Filipino LGBTQ activists understand Pride in four different modes: militant; celebratory; creative; and queer (Evangelista 2017a; 2017b). Each mode of understanding idealizes Pride in specific ways. From the socialist standpoint, radical

activists understand Pride as militant and political. Reflecting on the 1994 March, Murphy asserted:

> *Kami na nandoon sa unang martsa na ND [national democracy/far Left], nakikita naming ang labnaw na [Pride]. Hindi na ganoon ka-militante. Nawala na 'yong rebolusyonaryong anyo noong kilusang LGBT.*
>
> (We, who identify as ND [national democracy/far Left] and who participated at the 1994 March, see that it [Pride] has become hallow. It's not that militant anymore. The revolutionary form of the LGBT movement was lost.)

Critical of consumerist practices within the Pride Parade, militant activists from the national democratic Left maintain that the event has been colonized by capitalist practices. They purport that Pride ought to be militant not only to be truly emancipatory but also to gain support from workers, peasants, and other marginalized sectors. This understanding obviously finds affinity with the socialist ideology and class frame. In contrast, some adherents believe that celebration is a fundamental characteristic of the parade. Jomar Fleras (former director of ROF) reflected on their time as the lead organizer of the Pride March:

> *Na-feel namin 'yon na we were not angry, and we created a community. The essence of Pride March is not to antagonize the community but to bring them to understand. I think by being festive nagawa namin 'yon.*
>
> (We felt that we were not angry, and we created a community. The essence of Pride March is not to antagonize the community but to bring them to understand. I think by being festive we are able to do that.)

This understanding foregrounds the *celebratory mode* as it rationalizes the carnivalesque tone of the march. Partying and dragging are seen as strategic manners of contestations meant to engage stereotypes that lead to hiya or shame associated with LGBTQ identities in Philippine society (Thoreson, 2012).

This mode, then, frames Pride as a cultural contestation meant to engage false stereotypes about the community. Hence, the celebratory mode finds affinity with the consciousness frame since it seeks to change people's attitudes rather than broader social arrangements.

While the first two modes highlight a specific characteristic that Pride should exude, the next two modes attempt to either resolve or accommodate various meanings associated with the march. Hinged primarily on the legal frame, the creative mode understands Pride as political and celebratory at the same time. It seeks to find the balance between political campaigns and partying. Within this frame, both elements are essential given that the primary goal is to legislate policies relevant to LGBTQ rights. As Chris (former TFP convener) asserted:

> *Feeeling ko steppingstone siya [to serious legislative LGBT activism]. That's why there is a socialization. Light lang, 'di ba? Chika-chika ka muna. Party gan'yan na may kaunting advocacy.*
>
> (I feel that it [Pride] is a steppingstone into [serious legislative LGBT activism]. That's why there is socialization. It should be light, right? You need to have light conversations. You need to party. There is a little bit of advocacy discussion.)

This mode primarily frames Pride as a political contestation with goals and claims directed towards legislating policies. To fulfill this goal, Pride cannot lose its political and its celebratory character in view of motivating and recruiting newcomers into the movement. Both characteristics are valuable since effecting legislative change not only requires enunciated claims but also a substantial and sustained number of people standing behind those claims. Also recognizing the multiple characteristics of Pride, the *queer mode* renders Pride open to a variety of meanings. As one Trans A maintained:

> *Kung may mga taong politics…at dala-dala nila 'yong pulitika sa Pride, okay 'yon, 'di ba? Pero hindi naman parepareho 'yong level ng politicization ng mga tao, 'di ba?*

> *So 'yong mga ibang tao naman pumupunta sa Pride para mag-celebrate, okay rin naman kung ganoon, 'di ba? Kasi iba-iba talaga.*
>
> (There are people who are political, and they bring their political beliefs to Pride. That's okay, right? But not everybody has the same level of politicization, right? There are people who go to Pride to celebrate. That's also okay, right? It's really diverse.)

This mode willingly accepts various meanings associated with Pride as valid on the basis of fluidity and diversity. Pride and the meanings attached to it are understood as historically situated. This recognition slightly differs from the creative mode. The former resolves the tension between the political and the celebratory within the lens of legislative agenda while the queer mode accommodates various meanings to avoid a static view of the march. It does not resolve rather it sits comfortably within the irony of diverse and, sometimes, seemingly conflicting meanings.

Throughout the years, Pride took on various modes based on the ideological character of the organizations leading it. The 1994 March is militant partly due to the socialist orientation of PROGAY Philippines. From 1995-1998, ROF led flamboyant parades foregrounding cultural contestation due to its leaning with the consciousness frame. When TFP took over in 1999, the march shifted to the legislative route as it, highlights the human rights frame. In recent years, the queer mode is gaining traction as participants increase and diversify. Therefore, while the appropriation of a western practice like Pride elucidates global thinking, Filipino organizers continuously reconfigure it to respond to their unique sensibilities and local exigencies.

The terrains of contentions within the LGBTQ movement in the country unravel the relationship of politics and culture. While LAGABLAB and Pride are currently centered on legislative endeavors, cultural practices like partying and dragging remain important not only as pedagogical tools meant to educate the public but also as mechanisms to recruit adherents that will feed the legislative battle. The cultural then is strategically

understood in relation to the political. Therefore, the repertoire of contentious actions within the LGBTQ movement in the Philippines muddles the conceptual dichotomy between the old and the new by treating culture as strategic tool to feed political causes and vice versa.

Conclusion

This article could be read against three popular notions. First, insights here arrest the notion that there is no LGBTQ movement in the Philippines. Anchoring on Diani's (1992) integrated conceptualization of social movements, I empirically demonstrate that there are sustained networks of organizations engaging in both political and cultural terrains of conflict in view of transforming attitudes, cultures, and policies in favor of the LGBTQ community. These insights not only provide a conceptual understanding of the movement but also locate it as a legitimate actor worthy of state attention. However, questions of success, outcomes, and strength should be addressed elsewhere since they lie beyond the scope of my current inquiry.

Secondly, this paper is in conversation with the public notion that Pride is a cultural party rather than a political protest. While it is impossible to deny that partying is an element of Pride, it would be naive to think that no politics is embedded in these celebrations. Partying is political in three counts. First, it is deployed to confront the culture of *hiya* or shame associated with LGBTQ identities—to party is to be proud. Next, it is seen as a way to educate the public about the diversity of the community in view of transforming attitudes. Finally, partying is seen as a mechanism to recruit adherents who would carry on the torch of the struggle. Framed this way, partying in Pride ceases to be just carnivalesque rather a tactic deployed in view of enriching political claims.

Finally, consistent with criticisms against new social movement theories, the case of the LGBTQ movement in the Philippines conflates the conceptual dichotomy between the old and the new. Organizations and networks advocating LGBTQ causes emerged in various segments of the Left, hence,

exposing their intimate relationship with old movements. Also, the characteristics of the LGBTQ constituencies reveal not only sexual and gender hierarchies but also fractures on the basis of class. Finally, the shared beliefs within the movement are generated on the basis of both material and post-material values. Hence, the forms of contentions within the movement reveal the relationship of politics and culture.

References

Armstrong, E. and Crage, S. (2006). Movements and memory: The making of the Stonewall myth. American Sociological Review, 71 (1), 725-751

Barker, C. and Dale, G. (1998). Protest waves in western Europe: A critique of "new social movement" theory. Critical Sociology, 24 (1/2), 65–104

Benford, R.D. and. Snow, D.A. (2000). Framing processes and social Movements: An overview and assessment. Annual Review of Sociology, 26 (1), 611-39

Bernstein, M. (1997). Celebration and suppression: The strategic uses of identity by the lesbian and gay movement. American Journal of Sociology, 103 (3), 531-565

Browne, K. (2006). Challenging queer geographies. Antipode, 38 (1), 885-893

Brown-Saracino, J. and Ghaziani, A. (2009). Constraints of culture: Evidence from the Chicago Dyke March. Cultural Sociology, 3(1), 51-75

Buechler, S.M. (1995). New social movement theories. The Sociology Quarterly, 36 (3), 441-64

Collins, P. H. 2009. Black Feminist Thought. New York, NY: Routledge

Coloma, R.S. (2013). Ladlad and parrhesiastic pedagogy: Unfurling politics and education in the global south. Curriculum, 43 (4), 483-511

Dalton, R. J., Kuechler, M. and Burklin, W. (1990). The challenge of wew movements. In R.J. Dalton, M. Kuechler and W. Burklin (Eds.), Challenging the Political Order (pp. 3-20) New York, N.Y: Oxford University Press

D'Emilio, J. (2002). The world turned: Essays on gay history, politics, and culture. Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Diani, M. (1992). The concept of social movement. The Sociological Review, 40 (1), 1-25

Donnelly, J. (2013). International Human Rights, 4th edition. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press

Eggert, N. and Guigni, M. (2015). Does the class cleavage? The social composition of participants in demonstrations addressing redistributive and cultural issues in three countries. International Sociology, 30 (1), 21-3

Enguix, B. (2009). Identities, sexualities and commemorations: Pride parades, public space and sexual dissidence. Anthropological Notebooks ,15 (2), 15-33

Estenberg, K.G. (1992). From accommodation to liberation: A social movement analysis of lesbians in the homophile movement. Gender and Society, 8 (3), 424-43

Evangelista, J.A.G. (2017a). 'Wag mashokot! makiwarla!: Metro Manila Pride March as pakikibeki and pakikibaka within the Philippine LGBT movement (Unpublished master's thesis). University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Evangelista, J.A.G. (2017b). Mula sa kinaroroonang ideolohiya: Kontrobersya sa tungkol sa "unang" Pride March sa Pilipinas. Saliksik, 6 (2), 256-296

Fadaee, S. (2011). Environmental movements in Iran: Application of the new social movement theory in the non-European context. Social Change, 41 (1), 76-96

Garcia, Neil. 1994. Philippine gay culture: The last thirty years. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

Gruszczynska, A. (2009). Sowing the seeds of solidarity in public space: Case study of the Ponzan March of Equality. Sexualities, 12 (3), 312-333

Hourigan, N. (2001). New social movement theory and minority language television campaigns. European Journal of Communication, 16 (1), 77-100

Inglehart, R. (1990). Values, ideology and cognitive mobilization in new social movements. In R.J Dalton and M. Kuechler (Eds.), Challenging the Political Order (pp. 43-66). New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Johnston, H., Larana, E. and Gusfield, J. (1994). Identities, grievances and new social movements. In H. Johnston, E. Larana and J. Gusfield (Eds.), New social movements, (pp. 3-35). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press

Kates, S.M. and Belk, R.W. (2001). The meanings of gay and lesbianPride day: Resistance through consumption and resistance to consumption. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 30 (4), 392-429

Klandermans, B. (1992). The social construction of protest and multi-organizational fields. In A.D. Morris and C. McGlurg Muller (Eds.), Frontiers of social movement theory, (pp. 77-103). London, UK: Yale University Press

Lago, A.T. (2018, July 3). Get the message: Signs that caught our eye during the Metro Manila Pride 2018. Rappler, Retrieved from website: https://www.rappler.com/life-and-style/arts-and-culture/206232-metro-manila-pride-2018-signs

MacAdam D., McCarthy, J. and Zald, M. (2005). Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing process-toward synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements. In D. MacAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. Zald, (Eds.), Comparative perspectives on social Movements: Political opportunities, mobilization resources and cultural framing (pp. 1-20). New York, New York: Cambridge University Press

Manalansan, M. 1(997). Global divas: Filipino gay men in diaspora. Quezon City: Ateneo Press.

McCarthy, J.D. and Zald, M.N. (1977). Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory. The American Journal of Sociology, 82 (6), 1212-1241

Melucci, A. (1989). Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society. Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.

Melucci, A. (1980). The new social movement: A theoretical approach. Social Science Information, 19 (2), 199-226

Milkman, R. (2017). A new political generation: Millennials and the post-2008 wave of protest. American Sociological Review, 82 (1), 1-31

Mudu, Pierpaolo. (2002). Repressive Tolerance and the Vatican in Rome. GeoJournal, 58 (2/3), 189-96

Offe, C. (1987). Changing boundaries of insitutional politics: Social movements since the 1960s. In C.S. Maier (Ed.), Changing boundaries of the political (pp. 63-105). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press

Ofreneo, M.A. P. and Casal de Vela, T. (2010). Spheres of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender struggles. Gender, Technology and Development, 14 (2), 197-215

Pineda, R. (2001). Bridging gaps, marking a struggle: The history of Filipina lesbian struggle in the Philippines. Kasarinlan, 16 (1), 31-62

Plotke, D. (1990). Who so new about new social movements?. Socialist Review, 20 (1), 81-102

Prado, M.A.M and Machado, F.V. (2014). Far beyond the rainbow: The constitutions of collective identities between civil society and the state. Annual Review of Critical Psychology, 11 (1), 131-150

Soriano, C.R.R. (2014). Constructing collective identity in diversity: Online political mobilization of a national LGBT political party. Media, Culture and Society, 36 (1), 20-36

Soriano, C.R.R. and Cao, R.J. (2016). Minority groups and strategies of display and dissent in physical, virtual and hybrid spaces. In M. Rovisco and J.C. Ong. Taking the square: Mediated dissent and occupations of public space (pp. 211-228). London, United Kingdom: Rowman and Littlefield

Stoecker, R. (1995). Community, movement, organization: The problem of identity convergence in collective Action. The Sociological Quarterly, 36 (1), 111-30

Tan, Michael. 1995. From bakla to gay: Shifting gender identities and sexual behaviors in the Philippines. In R.G. Parker and J.H. Gagnon. Conceiving sexuality: Approaches to sex Research in a postmodern world (Pp. 85-96). New York: Routledge

Tarrow, S. (2011). Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (1984). Social movements and national politics. In Bright, C. and Harding, S (Eds.), State-making and social movements (pp. 297-317). Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press

Thoreson, R.R. (2012). Realizing human rights in Manila: Brokers and the mediation of sexual politics in the Philippines. GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies, 18 (4), 529-563

Touraine, A. (1981). The voice and the eye: An analysis of social movements. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Turner, R. and Killian, L. (1987). Collective behaviour. Englewood Cliff, New Jesey: Prentice Hall

United Nations Development Program and United States Agency for International Development. (2014). Being LGBT in Asia: The Philippines country report. Bangkok, Thailand: UNDP

Van Dyke, N. (2006). Political opportunities and collective Identity in Ohio's gay and lesbian movement, 1970 to 2000. Sociological Perspectives, 49 (4), 503-26

Van, S. J. and Klandermans, B. (2009). Social movement theory: Past, present and prospect. In I. van Kessel and S. Ellis (Eds.), Movers and shakers: Social movements in Africa (pp. 17-43). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill

Walters, G. J. (1995). Human rights in theory and practice: A selected and annotated bibliography. Hackensack, New Jersey: Salem Press

Ward, J. (2003). Producing 'Pride' in West Hollywood: A queer cultural capital for queers with cultural capital. Sexualities, 6 (1), 65-94

Acknowledgement

My thesis was funded by the UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development under the Thesis Grant.