

Editor's Notes

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Jorge V. Tigno

It's been said that coffee leads to better personal engagements. This issue of the Philippine Social Sciences Review (PSSR) contains two articles that take up these subjects – coffee and civic engagements.

In Rise and Decline of the Coffee Industry in 19th-Century Batangas: Causes and Consequences, Aidel Paul Belamide traces the history of the coffee industry in Batangas during the Spanish colonial period. Batangas has long enjoyed an undisputed reputation as the country's coffee capital. But despite its reputation, Belamide notes, written historical works on the topic continue to be limited although there are mentions of it by some present-day scholars. What Belamide does is to attempt to construct a social history of the coffee industry in Batangas during the 19th century – the most formative (and perhaps turbulent) period in its history.

Based on historical records from the period, Belamide surmises that the coffee industry began in Batangas between the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. Even then, Belamide notes, Batangas coffee was set apart from coffee grown in other parts of the country due to its regular form as well as perfect roast and flavor. The coffee industry flourished during the early part of the 19th century due to increased demand for the product mainly as an alternative to tea and also because of the economic reforms that occurred during the period that allowed for trade in the colonies that in turn led to the conversion of ranch lands into coffee plantations.

But by the late 19th century, the coffee industry in Batangas had begun to experience a decline owing mainly to pest infestations and oversupply of the product. Pests and diseases led to a sharp decline in coffee harvests as farmers uprooted their trees. At the same time, major coffee-producing countries like Brazil created a glut in supply that pushed prices down. Likewise, the revolutionary war of independence in the Philippines also had an obviously huge negative impact on the coffee industry in Batangas. These conditions led to a decline in coffee trade from the Philippines by the latter part of that century. Belamide concludes that the coffee industry in Batangas had emerged, thrived, and suffered a decline within the span of a century. But these rapid changes also led to the emergence of a social organization in the province made of traders, planters, and farmworkers linked together by the same product – coffee.

In Embodying the Promises of the People Power Revolution: Public Service as Civic Engagement among Millennial Officers in a Philippine City Jail, Hannah Glimpse Nario-Lopez, Mary Jaysel Entienza, and Samantha Piers provide an interesting take on the people power revolt of 1986 and how it's been perceived by a specific part of the millennial generation – jail officers. According to them, millennials have been thought of as having a more liberal and democratic mindset. Their aim is to test this in the case of the civic engagements among early-career jail officers. The jail system is integral to the backbone of the country's democracy project and can contribute significantly to nation-building – key components of the people power uprising. How the people power event plays itself out in the minds and memories of millennials can provide a better understanding of the democratization challenges the country is facing especially in the realm of justice and penology.

The authors looked into the viewpoints of young millennial jail officers (i.e., those born between 1985 and 1996) in 2019 by way of focus group discussions (FGDs). They also

analyzed secondary data sources on emotional labor among jail officers. Their findings show that millennial jail officers cherish the concepts of democracy and justice as part of the legacy of people power. For the young jailers, people power represents the struggle to overthrow a dictatorial regime, reclaim their rights and freedoms, and consolidate democracy. However, for the jail officers, civic engagement goes beyond electoral rights, activism, membership in organizations and alternative consumerism. Ultimately, the jailers' public service is their way of delivering justice and contributing to democracy – the hallmarks of people power.

The authors recommend that future studies explore other means of civic engagements among different millennial sectors. The authors also note the need to look deeper into the sense of millennials' discontent towards traditional politics and incompetent leadership and urges a revisiting of existing political structures that provide avenues for youth political engagements. What their study shows is that it is certainly important to consider the voice of the youth on matters that pertain not only to their well-being but also to the well-being of the entire country as well.