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Praxis paper

VIOLENCE IN BAGONG SILANG

A research report prepared in collaboration
between DIGNITY and Balay

By Steffen Jensen, Karl Hapal
and Jens Modvig

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DIGNITY Publication Series on Torture and Organised Violence No. 2

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Contents

Foreword.....	1
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	3
Summary of results	4
Chapter 2: Methodology.....	5
Victimization Survey.....	5
Process and Organization of Research.....	5
Mapping Exercise 1	6
Pilot Test.....	8
Administering the Questionnaire	8
Data Encoding	8
Triangulation of Results of the Victimization Survey.....	9
Qualitative Interviews and Ethnographic Observation.....	9
Methodological Challenges	9
Chapter 3: Findings of the Victimization Survey.....	11
Social Capital and Community	11
Social network.....	12
Trust	12
Social Functioning.....	12
Perceptions of Violence	13
Perpetrators and Acts of Violence	14
The Government vis-à-vis Violence Prevention.....	14
Attitude Questions.....	14
Reported Levels of Violence in Bagong Silang	15
The Victims.....	15
Time, Location and Identity of Perpetrator	16
Time and Location.....	16

Perpetrators of the Violent Acts	17
Damages, Assistance and Justice.....	17
Damages	17
Assistance	18
Justice	18
Summary	18
 Chapter 4: Community, Violence and Conflict in Bagong Silang	21
Quantitative findings on network, trust and violence	21
Communal conflicts.....	23
The path walk	25
Pakikisama versus Abuso.....	27
Community, Violence and Conflict Revisited	30
 Chapter 5: Policing Bagong Silang	33
Policing Structures in Bagong Silang	33
Violence and Policing.....	36
<i>Ok Lang</i> – Everyday Forms of Police Violence	37
Excessive Violence – beyond <i>Ok Lang</i>	39
Policing and Violence Revisited.....	44
 Chapter 6: Recommendations	45
 References	47

Foreword

On its 30th anniversary, 30 November 2012, RCT, the Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims changed its name to **DIGNITY – Danish Institute Against Torture**. A name that we find much better covers what the organization is doing and what our work is all about; ensuring people's dignity. Torture is one of the grossest attacks on any human's dignity. We are very proud of the new name and we are certain that with the new name, we will better achieve our goals towards a torture free world.

DIGNITY was the first of its kind dealing with both the rehabilitation of torture survivors and the prevention of torture. The mandate has expanded over the years to include other forms of organised violence. As our knowledge still is limited in this field in relation to what works and what does not, research and other forms of knowledge generation has become central in the work of DIGNITY. The material is being published in relevant media, including peer- reviewed journals. In addition, RCT has had its own series which is now being re-launched with the new name.

We are indeed happy to present the praxis paper "Violence in Bagong Silang". This is the second in DIGNITY Publication Series on Torture and Organised Violence replacing the old series under the RCT name. The new series will consist of both praxis papers and working papers. The praxis papers are publications where we or our partners document some of our practical experience on ensuring reparation for survivors from torture and the prevention of torture and organised violence. The working papers are to be used by our researchers to convey some of their early findings in the research process or findings that may be useful for practitioners or fellow researchers, but not necessarily befitting as a peer reviewed scientific publication. We anticipate having about 4 publications annually.

This publication is an example where we try to integrate research with intervention. It is based on a study done in close co-operation with Balay Rehabilitation Center in the Philippines with the intention of making research support and guide interventions. The study provides insights on how to best address the problem of torture and organised violence in poor areas of Metro Manila. In the coming years we will see more of this type of cooperation.

The study is using an instrument; the victimization survey that DIGNITY researchers have developed together with partners in low and middle income countries. It has become a rather comprehensive instrument using quantitative as well as qualitative methods borrowing from public health research as well as from anthropological oriented development studies. It is studying the locale: the local cultural traits related to violence (whether inducing or reducing violence), the inhabitants in the two selected parts of Bagong Silang, the local policing institutions as well as the national police operating in the area. In relation to the national police, we see that parts of it are into rent seeking activities. At the same time some of these have the view that they have some sort of right to 'clean up' the society. This perspective is regrettably seen in several other countries where DIGNITY has activities.

The study is also using the local concepts when analysing and understanding the local dynamics. Seemingly, local cultural traits have a considerable risk reducing effect. The positive effect of the local cultural traits is an interesting issue as it seems that is different in the other countries where DIGNITY has been involved in similar studies. The praxis paper ends with a list of recommendations for intervention in a setting like Bagong Silang which will have implications for future interventions. With these teasers we encourage you to read the study that you have in your hand and feel free to come with your comments. We need all the inputs we can get to achieve our vision: A world without torture!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

During the latter part of Marcos' regime, Bagong Silang (New Birth) was established as a relocation site for the thousands of squatters about to be dislocated from their homes around metro-Manila to clear land for economic development, roads or otherwise. Some were forcibly moved to Bagong Silang, which is located far away from main economic activity. Others saw life in Bagong Silang as the possibility for a new beginning. Many of the areas from where the resettled people came were quite violent. Inter-personal violence occurred on a regular basis and crime rates were said to be high. Furthermore, state violence in different forms was also rumoured to be high, as was the violence perpetrated by land owners in order to 'persuade' people to move from the contested land. None of these forms of violence disappeared with the establishment of Bagong Silang. From these initial days of violence, Bagong Silang has maintained a reputation of being a violent and dangerous place with high crime rates; gangs and fraternities are stable elements in the social life in Bagong Silang, as is state or state-endorsed violence, although, as we shall see, at a lower level and nature of violence in Bagong Silang and most accounts remain anecdotal or build on hearsay or stereotypes of the poor and the different. This report attempts to address this lack of knowledge. It is based on several different sets of data: a victimization survey, a data base of all reports made to the local adjudicating body (*Katarungang Pambarangay*), interviews with residents and law enforcement agencies as well as ethnographic observations. The central part of the data set is the victimization survey, the rest of the data is used to understand and explain the results of the survey. The survey explores 1) the nature and extent of violence in Bagong Silang, 2) the emotional, physical and material impact violence have on people's lives and 3) what victims of crime and violence do to seek redress. On the basis of the results from the survey, the report explores two issues in depth – inter-personal violence in communities and state-perpetrated violence. The results from the victimization survey is presented in Chapter 3, whereas Chapter 4 explores interpersonal violence and its relation to notions of community and Chapter 5 explores state violence. In Chapter 6, we outline some of the possible consequences the conclusions of the report have for Balay's intervention in Bagong Silang.

Through this study, we aim to establish better understanding of the nature and extent of interpersonal, communal and state violence in Bagong Silang in order to provide an evidence-based foundation for interventions. Balay Rehabilitation Center Inc in Manila and DIGNITY - Danish Institute Against Torture¹ in Copenhagen have been involved in an intervention project in Bagong Silang since 2007. The project focuses on young people in conflict with the law. It offers psycho-social and legal services to victims of state violence. It also aims to prevent state violence by addressing the structural conditions that put young people at risk of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by the state and a life of criminality and violence. It is out of this project that the present report has grown. It is a collaborative effort involving the Bagong Silang community team at Balay (including Joy Lascano, Louie Crismo, JP Paas and Mel Dura), DIGNITY's international and research departments and Balay's partners in Bagong Silang without whom the research would have been quite different. We also wish to thank Balay's Executive Director Kaloy

¹ For more information about Balay and DIGNITY see www.balayph.net and www.dignityinstitute.org.

Anasarias, Elmer Malibiran, Matz Mustapha, Elna Søndergaard, Erik Wendt and Andrew Jefferson for important input at critical times. Stina Thurøe has formatted and edited the report.

Summary of results

Bagong Silang is a barangay, the lowest level of local government structures, but it is uncommonly large for a barangay. Barangays are often small entities with maybe 10,000 people. According to the survey, presented below, Bagong Silang is a poor and densely populated area. Based on projections of data from the survey, Bagong Silang is home to 253,192 individuals or 49,163 households.² Bagong Silang has a total area of 5.98 square kilometres. Given the population, the population density stands at 42,340 individuals per square kilometre. This is almost double of the metropolitan average of 24,247. The population of Bagong Silang is also relatively young with 59.79% of the population being comprised by young people (0 to 17 years old 43.64% and 18 to 25 years old 16.15%). The average annual income of a household in Bagong Silang is PHP111,691 just short of the national poverty threshold of PHP120,000 per year. Two out of three (65.5%) households live on incomes below the poverty threshold. The survey also indicates that 49% of the population is available to work of which 44% are unemployed. 69% of households receive economical support from relatives who are currently not living with them.

In terms of violence, about 7.5% of households reported to have experienced violence in the previous two years. Most of the violence was inter-personal with state-perpetrated violence constituting some 10% of the violence. The survey also explored people's perceptions about violence. Importantly, there is a disjuncture between perceived and actual occurrences of violence. Whereas people perceive violence to emanate from outside their immediate environment and to be perpetrated by young men organized in groups, actual levels of violence suggest that it emanates from within the community and is perpetrated by older men against the young. Few people report the incidents to be adjudicated by the state. Rather, they seek local mediation and adjudication. Most of those who went to state agencies felt that they received some kind of justice. While most incidents were considered to be minor, they did have impact on people's lives, notably emotionally. While some suffered effects to their schooling or work, no one went for medical attention following the violent incident. Hence, people seem to have coped individually rather than relying on the state.

The report explores two issues further, as they emerged as central in the quantitative work, namely violence and community and state-perpetrated violence. The report concludes that violence is seldom an occurrence between strangers but often emanate from communal conflicts and the maintenance of a patriarchal order of things. Finally, while state violence does not seem pervasive, it does happen. While the state violence often seems to be related to corruption and a sense - on the part of the police - that they are not respected, the police also perpetuate extraordinary forms of violence that are justified as a defence of order.

The conclusions from the report can feed into policy and intervention. In the last section of the report, we make recommendations to especially NGOs around issues of violence and the general public, local government, the police and young men.

² This number of residents is based on an extrapolation from the survey. In official accounts given for instance by local government, the number of residents is put at up to one million inhabitants (see for example http://www.tripurafoundation.org/data/_files/HOPE_Town_Tour.pdf). However, we believe this number to be grossly overestimated, maybe for political reasons as local government subsidies are based on number of inhabitants.

Chapter 2: Methodology

In this section we shall briefly discuss the methodologies employed by the study. The research used a *victimization survey* as its main research tool.³ The victimization survey was carried out to determine 1) the rate and nature of violent episodes in Bagong Silang, 2) the emotional, physical and material impact of violence on people's lives and 3) what victims of crime and violence do to seek redress. In order to ensure the validity of the results of the survey, the rate of violence indicated in the *victimization survey* were triangulated to the rate of violence indicated in reports from the local government. The quantitative results from the victimization survey were complimented and interpreted using data from ethnographic observations and interviews with different actors in the community carried out between October 2009 and November 2010.

Victimization Survey

The victimization survey is a research tool used in order to measure the level of violence in Bagong Silang. This version of the survey instrument was adopted from two other surveys implemented in South Africa (Jensen et al 2011) and Guatemala (Gonzales et al 2011). The survey defined violence as threats or use of physical force (*pwera*) by the police, the Barangay, young people or neighbours. While the primary purpose of the victimization survey was to measure the level of violence in Bagong Silang, the instrument assessed people's perception about violence, the nature of these violent acts (i.e. who are the main perpetrators? who are often victimized?), and what do people do to seek redress.

The strength of a victimization survey is that it seeks to capture actual levels of violence by asking those that might have been affected rather than relying on official data. These are often incomplete and there is always the danger that victims will not have reported incidents to the officials. Hence, a study of violence in Bagong Silang cannot rely on records from the Barangay and the Police. Records of the Barangay only take into account "legal" residents; informal settlers are, for a wide variety of reasons, not documented. As such, official records and statistics from the Barangay can only give us a partial picture about the prevalence of violence in the said area should it be used.

Process and Organization of Research

The implementation of the victimization survey involves two main processes: (1) mapping of the target area and (2) administering the questionnaires to randomly selected households obtained from the mapping exercise. We shall later elaborate on the activities involved in the two processes. For now, let us look at how the research was organized.

20 enumerators were recruited through Balay by consulting local partners in the area. All of the 20 enumerators are residents of Bagong Silang. Based on experiences elsewhere (Jensen et al, 2011; Jacobsen et al, 2008), data quality benefits when using local enumerators because these people have intimate knowledge about the area that help in implementing and interpreting the survey and its results. In addition, resident enumerators of Bagong Silang also helped gain access to selected households.

³ Similar surveys have been carried out in Vrygrond in South Africa and in five provinces in Guatemala (see Jensen et al, 2011; Gonzales et al, 2011).

Before starting the implementation of the victimization survey, a 3-day workshop was held together with the enumerators to orient them about the objectives of the research, procedures in implementing the survey and relevant skills (i.e. mapping of an area). At the end of the workshop, the enumerators were divided into five teams with four enumerators in each team. The teams were divided into pairs. Working in pairs was the most efficient and safe way of doing the victimization survey. A team leader was assigned for each group. The team leaders' tasks were to oversee and check (quality control) the work done by the teams and to report to the project coordinator the progress of their work and concerns that may arise in the field. Karl Hapal from Balay served as the coordinator for the project. He managed the implementation of the project, guided the enumerators in their daily field work and resolved conflicts among the enumerators. Steffen Jensen served as consultant regarding technical aspects of the implementation of the survey.

Mapping Exercise 1

Barangay Bagong Silang, with a land area of 598 hectares, is the largest Barangay in the Philippines. The Barangay is divided into nine phases; each phase is then divided into packages; and each package is divided into blocks. Since 2007, Balay has been working in Bagong Silang, particularly in Phases 7 and 8; two of the largest phases in Bagong Silang and perceived to be two of the most violent areas in the Barangay.

Parallel to the preparation for the implementation of the victimization survey, a series of meetings were held with Balay and Steffen Jensen in order to determine which areas of Bagong Silang do the survey target as, given the limited amount of time and resources, it was impossible to implement the victimization survey in the whole area. At the end of the meetings, it was decided that the victimization survey shall focus on Phases 7 and 8, as they are intervention sites of the Balay and DIGNITY project providing psycho-social and legal support to victims of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The choice of phases 7 and 8 was made for purposes of informing intervention. This means that we cannot say anything statistically significant about the rest of Bagong Silang, the results are, however, arguably comparable to that of the rest of the area.

In February 2010, the first process in implementing the victimization survey started, which entailed verifying an official map of Bagong Silang from the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), reproduced below. Each team was assigned a package from Phases 7 and 8. As the latest updated map from NAMRIA was from 2003, the task of each team was to update the map for structures that have been put up or removed. This exercise was valuable in itself, as it illustrated the significant, but unnoticed changes in Bagong Silang. As one can see from the bottom map below, new structures have been erected around the edges of the formal street grid in what is known as 'excess lots'. The verified section of the larger map is located at the top, right part of the NAMRIA map. In this part of Bagong Silang, the excess lots have been erected along the Marilao River, which washed away many of the informal structures in 2009 during the typhoon Ondoy.



Figure 1: NAMRIA map from 2003 of phases 7 and 8 in Bagong Silang



Figure 2: Verified section of NAMRIA map. Blue coloured structures are residential and green structures are commercial. Black lines are streets or, as they are called, path walks.

Teams also differentiated structures that are used for commercial and residential purposes. At the end of mapping each package, Karl Hapal would quality control with enumerators by going to the specified package looking for inconsistencies in the map. At the end of the mapping exercise, 11 maps corresponding to a specific package was verified. The verified areas were estimated to cover around 5,000 individuals. This number was subsequently increased to 12,000 after the instrument had been piloted.

Pilot Test

After the mapping exercise, 75 questionnaires were administered to randomly selected households from the maps. After administering the questionnaires, a series of meetings and consultations with Jens Modvig (public health expert from DIGNITY) were done in order to spot flaws and strengths (what questions worked, which did not and how to reformulate them) in the questionnaire. Of particular concern was how to devise a mechanism to compensate for a possible under-reporting of violence by household heads in the questionnaire. In order to address this, a new procedure in administering the questionnaire was introduced. According to the old procedure, for a respondent to indicate that member/s of his or her household suffered from a violent act within 2008 to 2009, the individual with the latest experience of violence was to be interviewed separately – asking about the nature of the violent act and what he or she did to seek redress. In the new procedure, the latest victim was also to be asked whether he or she knows any other household members that have suffered from any violent acts (also within the period of 2008 to 2010) aside from those indicated by the initial respondent. This procedure was introduced in order to account for violent acts that were kept secret from the head of the household. By using this method, the research team was able to identify one extra case of violence.

Accounting for state-perpetrated violence was also of great concern for the research. In order to compensate for the possible under-reporting of state-perpetrated violence, the research team included “accusation questions” where the respondent would be asked whether the respondent or any member of his or her family have been accused by the Barangay or the police of doing something wrong.

Administering the Questionnaire

After finalizing the questionnaire, the team went on to the second process in the research – administering the questionnaires. In administering the questionnaires, each enumerator pair was given 40 randomly selected numbers. Using the verified map, each pair was tasked with identifying the built structures. Once at the structure, the pair checked the number of households in it. If more than one household, the pair was instructed to select from the households in the structure in a random manner. After a household was selected, enumerators were tasked to find the head of household and interview him or her. After their daily fieldwork, the team leaders collected all the finished questionnaires to check the quality of the work. The sample size was fixed at 400 households, determined by the resources available for the survey. After administering the 400 questionnaires, the project manager randomly selected 40 questionnaires and went back to re-interview informants in order to spot-check the quality of the data collected.

Data Encoding

Data from the questionnaires were encoded using Microsoft Excel and a test for data error was carried out. After encoding the 400 questionnaires, the Excel file was converted using the software StaTransfer in order to make it compatible to Stata, the software used to analyse the quantitative data. In later analysis, SPSS was used to analyse the data in more detail.

Triangulation of Results of the Victimization Survey

In order to validate the findings from the victimization survey, it is advised to triangulate the data (Sutherland et al 2002). Hence, the research team collected the so-called blotter records from offices in the Barangay where people might go to report incidents of violence; the records collected covered the years 2008 to July 2010 and included 16,000 records. The collected reports were then categorized into violent and non-violent incidents. Throughout the cumbersome work to capture and organize data from a very disparate pool of information not designed to generate research data, samples of the captured data were quality controlled by the project manager. The number and percentage of violent incidents were compared to the population of Bagong Silang in order to arrive at a figure that reflected the prevalence of violence. Figures from the Barangay Mediation Office (*Lupon ng Barangay*) was also collected and analysed in terms of violent and non-violent acts. Finally, figures from People's Law Enforcement Board (PLEB) that receives complaints and adjudicates cases involving state officials were included.

Qualitative Interviews and Ethnographic Observation

Qualitative interviews were also undertaken by the research team in order to compliment and help interpret the results. One set of interviews resulted from some respondents being re-interviewed to qualify their answers in the questionnaire – what were the reasons behind their answers. Another set of interviews was collected with a wide range of respondents in order to gain an understanding about how people understand violence. Interviews were also held with agents of the state, particularly those that are engaged in law enforcement, along with state officials that are engaged in child protection and rehabilitation. Finally, young people at risk – young people who are engaged in criminal activities and were also victims of the excesses of the state – were also interviewed. To complement the interviews ethnographic data on communal life and policing was collected in two areas of Bagong Silang.

Methodological Challenges

One of the reasons to conduct victimization surveys is to access forms of violence that go unreported in official data on violence. By asking people about the experiences they have had with violence, we compensated for the fact that most people often do not report violent events to the police; neither do they go to hospitals. This is of course especially the case in places like Bagong Silang where the health system is overburdened and often far away and where the police are reputedly violent and corrupt. Furthermore, as most people are uninsured, they do not need the official police records to file an insurance claim. As this report also shows, victimization surveys are better equipped to access the unreported cases of violence, there are still challenges that need to be dealt with.

One reason for underreporting in a victimization survey is the understanding of violence. While enumerators are careful to explain the concept of violence to informants, it is still subjective what constitutes a threat that is out of the ordinary or normal (in Tagalog *ok lang*) and hence not worth mentioning. Only incidents that are out of the ordinary are likely to be remembered for any length of time. Another reason for underreporting concerns the main informants of the survey, the heads of household. The enumerators asked to speak to the head of household or somebody who could speak for the household. Hence, enumerators mainly spoke with older women or men on the assumption that they would know what had happened in the household, also with the younger members that were the ones most likely to have been victims of violence. The assumption of a unified family is potentially problematic. In order to address this bias, enumerators also asked those that the initial informants had pointed out as

victims whether they knew of any victims of crime unknown to the parents. In the survey, we identified one more victim in this way. However, it might be that there were other victims that would have been known to other people in the household than those interviewed. This method was however the necessary compromise. In order to deal with the problem, every single member of all households would have had to be interviewed.

The taboo of violence constitutes another reason why parents would not know, or would not want to talk about violent events. Having been a victim of violence often suggests that the victim was somehow to blame. Hence, both parents and young people would be hesitant to discuss issues of violence; one informant originally said 'no' to our question only for us later to learn that he had indeed been a victim of violence but did not want neither research team nor parents to know about it.

Ironically, there is also the possibility of bloated official data on violence rather than violence being under-reported. In the so-called blotter reports, we see a tendency that the figures of violence are at least on par with the findings of the victimization survey. One reason for this is that the blotter reports result from inter-communal conflicts. If one community member reports a case to the local authorities, this complaint will typically be met with a counter-complaint from the accused person. Hence, one incident of violence will often elicit several blotter reports. Furthermore, complaints will often be exaggerated in order to improve one's case with the authorities. In the report, we aim to triangulate the different forms of data and reflect on the individual sources of data.

A specific concern was the danger of under-reporting of state violence. The concern was that people would not recognize state violence, if they experienced it. The taboo of violence would also be particularly relevant in relation to state authorities because it would suggest that the victim had done something wrong. Furthermore, there was the concern that people would be afraid to report violence by the state out of fear for repercussions. We promised the informants anonymity, but feared that it would not be enough. To address the concern, we introduced a category of questions asking whether people in the household had been accused of a crime by the authorities. The hope was that we might get informants to reflect on incidents with the policing structures and understand that we would not hold it against them.

A final methodological challenge concerns the concept of community that is crucial for the findings about social capital, trust and network, as well as for understanding the relationship between perceived and actual levels of violence. The difficulty is to capture subjective sense of place with identifiable physical boundaries. Through the pilot testing of the first survey instrument, we also asked people how they defined community. The overarching response was that community referred to block and package, which are the smallest administrative units of the Barangay (one package often consists of three to four blocks). However, it still remains a question how to analytically correlate physical locality to perceptions of safety.

In spite of the methodological challenges, we are quite certain that the results of the survey reflect important patterns in violence in Bagong Silang. Furthermore, violence is per definition very hard to measure for the reasons given in the section on methodological challenges. In this way, the results may constitute the best available data for a place like Bagong Silang. In addition, many of the reservations are also the point of departure for and inform the qualitative analyses in Chapters 4 and 5 on community, violence and conflict and state violence.

Chapter 3: Findings of the Victimization Survey

In this chapter, we present the findings of the victimization survey in order to explore the levels and nature of violence in Bagong Silang and to identify risk factors. We also explore perceptions of violence of people perceived to be the most likely perpetrators; where they perceive violence to emanate from and how state agencies perform in relation to the prevention of violence. Secondly, we explore issues of social capital (networks, trust and social functioning), as social capital is important for how people can act in relation to violence. Finally, we enquire into what people do after having become victims of violence (health and justice).

Social Capital and Community

Before we start discussions about social capital, we need to define the concept of community as it was understood in Bagong Silang. After the pilot test, respondents were asked about their views about what a community is. The majority of the respondents would refer to the people living along their pathwalk or block as members of their community. In what follows, we will use block and community interchangeable. Contrary to insiders (members of community, living in the same block or package), people outside their blocks are treated as outsiders or *taga-labas* in Filipino.

Generally speaking, a block is composed of two to three pathwalks or narrow alleyways. Flanking each pathwalk are series of small houses. Most blocks are dense and cramped with houses. Most of the households in the block have been settled there for a long time. Results from the survey indicate that the average length of stay of households in Bagong Silang is 14.5 years. People began residing in Bagong Silang in 1965, although their number was small. The vast majority of people came between 1985 and 1990 after Bagong Silang became a relocation site in the dying years of the Marcos regime to clear slum areas in other parts of Manila. Between 1985 and 1990, an average of 46,000 individuals or around 8,300 households arrived every year. While most of the residents of Bagong Silang are relatively settled, around 20% of the residents of Bagong Silang have been living there for less than 5 years. We continue the discussion on the community in Chapter 4. The survey used indicators on social network, trust and social functioning as proxy indicators to measure the levels of social capital in the area.

Social capital as employed in this section is a composite figure of social network, trust and social functioning. The strength of people's networks was calculated on the basis of how many links and connections they had to people and institutions as well as their feelings of trust and solidarity with their

fellow community citizens. This is measured using the so-called SASCAT index.⁴ The index for social functioning is based on the International Classification of Functioning (ICF).⁵

Social network

The number of social networks was calculated by asking how many organizations people had joined and who they went to for help in times of trouble. The questions were accompanied by a list of choices from which the respondents were to choose. After the respondent answered the questions, a score was derived based on the number of items a respondent chose from the list. Based on the scores of respondents, it appears that the residents of Bagong Silang have very low levels of social network. For questions 1 and 2, which used a scale of 0 to 8, the average score was 0.64 and 0.34 respectively. For question 3, which used a scale of 0 to 9, the average score was 0.38. The low level of social network is of interest as we assume that the lower the number of social network an individual has, the more he or she is vulnerable to experiencing violent acts without being able to do anything about it.

Table: Questions Regarding Social Network and the Corresponding Score of Residents

<i>Questions for Social Capital</i>	<i>Score</i>
1. In the last 12 months have you been an active member of any of the following types of groups in your community?	0.64
2. In the last 12 months have you received any emotional, financial and assistance in helping you to know or do things from the following?	0.34
3. In the last 12 months did you receive any referral or information regarding emotional, financial or other forms of assistance from any of the following individuals?	0.38

Trust

Inside the community, in the block, people express high levels of trust. 66% expressed that the majority of the people living within their block can be trusted. In addition, almost all of the respondents, 86%, expressed that the majority of the people living in their block get along with each other; and 95% of them feel that they are really part of their block. In addition, 60% of the respondents feel that the majority of the residents in their respective blocks will not take advantage of them, even if they get the chance to do so. These percentages suggest that there is a high level of solidarity at the community or block level. The high level of trust is not extended to outsiders; they are generally mistrusted, even residents of adjacent blocks. In fact, when asked about people outside their respective blocks, the respondents indicate that they do not trust them and cite them as a source of violent and criminal activity.

Social Functioning

The survey also inquired into people's social functioning, based on ICF categories. The assumption is that the higher the level of violence is in an area, the greater likelihood of low social functioning. Using a five

⁴De Silva MJ, Harpham T, Tuan T, Bartolini R, Penny ME, Huttly SR. Psychometric and cognitive validation of a social capital measurement tool in Peru and Vietnam. *Soc Sci Med.* 2006 Feb;62(4):941-53; Coleman JS. Social Capital in the Creation of Human-Capital. *Am J Sociol.* 1988;94:;95-120.

⁵ The four questions regarding social functioning were based on the following ICF categories: d240: Handling stress and other psychosocial demands, d760: Family relationships, d810-839: Education, d850: remunerative employment and d910: Community life

point scale the respondents were asked to rate their functioning in three key areas: family life, work and education, and finally community, social and political life.

Table: Questions regarding social functioning

Functioning Inquired	Five Point Scale and Percentage of Answers from Respondents				
	With no difficulty	With little difficulty	With some difficulty	With much difficulty	With absolute difficulty
Family Life <i>Question: I am able to participate in, and maintain my family relations...</i>	17.25%	41.25%	27.75%	12.75%	1.00%
Work and Education <i>Question: I am able to participate in work or education...</i>	6.25%	33.00%	32.25%	25.25%	3.00%
Community, Social and Political Life <i>Question: I am able to participate in community, social and political outside family life...</i>	17.50%	17.75%	18.25%	34.50%	12.00%

58.50% of the respondents expressed that they are able to participate in family life with little or no difficulty. Few respondents (13.75%) expressed much difficulty or absolute difficulty in participating in family life. Difficulty increased in the area of work and education. Contrary to the ease with which people engage in family life and to some extent in educational and work life, over 64% indicated difficulty, much difficulty or absolute difficulty in participating in community, social and political life. Most of the respondents, upon re-interviewing them, expressed that they found it difficult to participate in this realm because they are too pre-occupied in fulfilling their duties in relation to family, education and work. According to some of the respondents, they do attend formal meetings and engage in talks about politics and daily affairs from time to time, whenever their time and schedule permit. We will return to the issue of trust, network and functioning in Chapter 4.

Perceptions of Violence

Most respondents did not view violence as their main problem. Only 2.5% put it as the top concern with 15.25% indicating that health was their main problem and overwhelming majority of 81.75% named poverty as their main problem.⁶ Asked whether the level of violence had increased in 2009 compared to 2008, 40% responded that crime had increased while 25% of the respondents said that the level of violence had decreased in 2009 compared to 2008.

⁶ In the Philippines, this might be unsurprising. However, in similar surveys in Guatemala and South Africa, violence was the biggest concern (see Jensen et al 2011; Gonzales et al, 2011).

Perpetrators and Acts of Violence

In terms of perceptions of perpetrators, 60.15% indicated that organized groups such as gangs and fraternities were the most frequent perpetrators of violent acts in their community. These organized groups are often associated to children and youths. Another large bulk of respondents, 35.09%, said that their neighbours were the most frequent perpetrators of violence in their area. Only 4% mentioned law enforcement agents (the police or the Barangay) as the most likely perpetrators in their area.

According to the respondents, most of the perpetrators of violent acts in their community come from and live in Bagong Silang; in fact, only 11.25% of the respondents perceive that the perpetrators of violent acts in their community come from outside of Bagong Silang. While an overwhelming majority of the respondents perceive that most of the perpetrators of violence in their community come from and live in Bagong Silang, few respondents, 18.50% perceive that these perpetrators of violent acts are from and living in their respective Packages. 32.0% of the respondents think that these perpetrators are from and living in other Packages [but inside their respective Phases]. Another 36.0% of the respondents perceive that these perpetrators are living in Bagong Silang but are outside of their respective Phases. The majority of the respondents perceive that most of the perpetrators of violent acts in their community come from the “outside” (see discussion about community) – people from other packages, phases or outside of Bagong Silang. This pattern is reflective of people’s perception that should there be any criminals or bad elements in their community, they are sure that they will not dare do it in their community. As residents in Bagong Silang say, “*Hindi sila tatae sa sarili nilang bakuran [They [perpetrators of violent acts and criminals in general] do not shit in their own backyard].*”

The majority of the respondents (65%) said that fighting [among individuals] was the most frequent form of violence in their communities. 27% of the respondents, on the other hand said that threats as the most frequent violent activity in their area. Threats involved hold-ups and extortion either by the police, operatives of the Barangay or gang members. A small number of respondents cite beatings (3.25%), killings (3.25%) or sexual violence (0.25%) as the most frequent violent activity in their area.

The Government vis-à-vis Violence Prevention

Using a five point scale – *very good, good, normal, bad and very bad* – respondents were asked about their views regarding the government’s efforts in preventing the incidence of violence in their respective areas. The respondents were asked to rate the performances of government at the Barangay, City and National level. Respondents reflect a similar pattern of answer in every level of government – Barangay, City and National level. Two thirds of the respondents rate the government’s (Barangay, City and National level) efforts in preventing the incidence of violence as “*Normal*”. We discuss the understanding of ‘normal’ in more detail in Chapter 5, where we argue that ‘normal’ should be understood as expected rather than satisfactory.

Attitude Questions

The survey also explored attitude questions. After being presented with four scenarios, respondents were asked if they approve or disapprove. The responses were as follows:

Table: Answer of survey respondents regarding the Attitude Questions

Scenarios	Yes (%)	No (%)
If the police catch a minor who is suspected of having committed a crime, is it ok for the police to beat him or her up?	1	99
If the police catch a minor who is guilty of a crime, is it ok for the police to beat him or her up?	6	94
If the police catch an adult who is suspected of having committed a crime, is it ok for the police to beat him or her up?	3.5	96.5
If the police catch an adult who is guilty of a crime, is it ok for the police to beat him or her up?	22.5	77.75

As indicated in the table, most of the respondents answered negative in the first three scenarios. Most respondents felt that it was not right for the police to beat a minor or even adult that is suspected of having committed a crime. Likewise, the respondents also felt that it was not right for the police to beat a minor even if he or she is guilty of a crime. The answer of respondents slightly changed when presented with the scenario of the police catching an adult who is guilty of a crime. As opposed to scenarios 1, 2 and 3 where the approval rate is extremely low, 22.5% of the respondents said that it was *OK* for the police to beat up an adult when he or she is guilty of a crime. We shall return to this discussion when we explore state violence in Chapter 5.

Reported Levels of Violence in Bagong Silang

Out of the 400 households interviewed in the survey, only 31 (7.5%) households had members that had experienced violence within the period of January 2008 to May 2010 with a total 36 individual incidents. As there are 2062 individuals in the 400 households interviewed by the survey, only 1.75% of individuals in the surveyed households have experienced violent incidents within the period of January 2008 to May 2010. Nearly half (16 out of 36 of incidents) of cases documented in the survey involved threats, 11 out of 36 involved beatings and 7 out of 36 were due to fighting. Incidents of killings⁷ and sexual violence appear to be minimal. Both categories have only one documented incident.

The Victims

Regarding the identity of the victims, 21 victims were children and/or youth below the age of 25 while 15 were adults. Two out of three victims of violence were male. In terms of educational levels of the 36 victims of violence, 9 had been to college. Most of the victims have, at least, entered secondary education or finished elementary education. Most of the victims (23 out 36 individuals) had no jobs or any sources of income aside from material support from other family members. Only 7 individuals have regular jobs while another 6 respondents have jobs that are irregular or intermittent in nature.

⁷ Calculated on a yearly basis and as a function of murder per 100,000 people, this translates into a murder rate of 25 per 100,000. According to the UNODC the Philippine rate of homicide was 5,4 per 100,000 in 2009 (<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/homicide.html>, accessed 23 April 2012)

Time, Location and Identity of Perpetrator

In this section, we ask about time and location of the violent act, as well as explore the identity of the perpetrator. This is to determine risk factors in relation to violent events.

Time and Location

In terms of time, most violent acts (21 cases) were documented in 2009. In 2008 there were only 7 cases, while a total of 8 cases were documented from the year 2010. The questionnaire was administered in April 2010 and the survey only covered a third of that year. However, if we get the number of cases documented by the survey from the year 2010 and extrapolate it to cover the whole year, we get a total of 24 cases. This is 6 cases more than in the year 2009. Should our extrapolation be valid, this might be an indication that violent incidents are on the rise in Bagong Silang. Another possibility is that people re-call recent events more clearly than events that happened further back in time.

Identifying the month of the year when the violent incident occurred is difficult as 14 out of 36 respondents were unable to answer the question (respondents forgot the month or was not sure when it happened). Based on the other 22 respondents, it appears that violent incidents peak during December (4 incidents) and January (7 incidents). Other incidents were documented to have happened in March (3 incidents), April (3 incidents), May (2 incidents), August (2 incidents) and October (1 incident).

The questionnaire likewise asked about the time when the violent incident happened. 21 out of 32 of the incidents happened during Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday. The respondents were asked to locate the time of the incident. 13 out of 32 or 40.63% indicated that the incident happened in the evening – around 7:00 PM to midnight. 9 out of 32 respondents indicated that the incident happened in the afternoon. 5 out of 32 mentioned that the incident happened at noon. Only 2 out of 32 respondents said that it happened in the morning and 1 out of 32 said it happened during the night. Two respondents did not answer the question.

Table: Time and day of incident

Day and Time of Incident	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	No answer	TOTAL
Morning	1							1	2
Noon		2			1			2	5
Afternoon			3	1		2	2	1	9
Evening	1	1	1		3	4	1	2	13
Night					1		1		2
No answer							1		1
TOTAL	3	2	4	1	5	6	5	6	32

In terms of location, more than half (20 out of 36) of the documented violent incidents happened inside the victim's package. Violent incidents happening outside Bagong Silang appear to be very minimal. Only three incidents happened outside of Bagong Silang. Most the respondents (20 or 62.50%) indicated that violent

events took place in the road or in pathwalks. Nine respondents identified public transport and terminals as the location of the incident.

Perpetrators of the Violent Acts

In relation to the identity of the perpetrator, most violence occurring in Bagong Silang is interpersonal between persons or groups that know each other, happening in or near the place where victims stay. Two out of three victims knew at least one of their perpetrators. Indeed, almost half of the perpetrators of violence were neighbours of the victims. Furthermore, most of the victims mentioned that they still see their perpetrators in places they often go to. This data runs against popular perception that perpetrators of violence come from the “outside”. For a more detailed explanation about the mismatch between popular perceptions and actual accounts of violence see Chapter 4.

Most of the violent incidents were perpetrated by adult males. Youth and children constitute less than a third of the perpetrators of violence. Again, this runs against popular perception that most of the “trouble” in their vicinity are caused by young people. As the survey has shown, adults are more likely to perpetrate violence than young people, and youth and children are more likely to suffer from violence than adults. Alcohol does not seem to be a factor in violent episodes. Most of the respondents believe that their attackers were not intoxicated with illegal drugs and/or alcohol during the attack. Finally, six respondents mentioned law enforcement agents as their attackers. We return to this issue in Chapter 5.

Damages, Assistance and Justice

The survey ended by exploring the consequences that victims suffered from the violence, what kind of assistance they sought or received (if any) and the extent to which they reported the incident to law enforcement agencies or the justice system.

Damages

The majority of the respondents (18 or 56.25%) suffered from physical injuries after the violent episode, most often bruising. These injuries were mostly caused by physical strength. Few respondents identified hard objects and sharp pointed weapons as the instrument used. Most of the injuries were considered minor and did not prevent majority of the respondents to work or go to school.

70% (23 out of 32) of the respondents expressed that the violent episode had some effect on them, often emotionally. While the degree of effect varied, respondents suffered damages to property and loss of money. Other effects were the inability to go to work or school as well as problems in their relationships with family and others.

Table: Effects of violence

Effects of violence	Number	Percentage
Very much	8	25.00%
Much	7	21.88%
Some	8	25.00%
Little	7	21.88%

Very little or no impact	2	6.26%
TOTAL	32	100.00%

Assistance

Less than half of the victims (14 out of 32 or 43.75%) saw law enforcement agents (police, tanods, puroks or task force) nearby during the incident. 4 out of 14 respondents received assistance from these units when the violent episode happened. While the majority of the respondents sustained physical injuries after the violent event, most of them did not receive any form of medical care.

Justice

Out of the 32 individuals who experienced violence and were interviewed about the incident⁸, only 14 individuals (43.75%) reported the incident to the authorities, as they thought that nothing would happen to the case. Others saw the incident as minor, one they could settle amongst themselves. This was common in cases where the perpetrators and victims knew each other.

Of the 14 individuals who went to report the incident, 12 (85.71%) indicated that the authorities gave attention to their case. Seven respondents also said that their neighbours or family members helped them in following-up or addressing the case.

11 or 78.57% of the respondents who sought the help of authorities said that their case ended in some form of resolution. Eight (57.14%) indicated that they were able to achieve justice. Generally, respondents who had some form of resolution to their case perceived that justice was achieved. For them, justice was achieved because of either (1) the two parties were able to arrive at some form of settlement or agreement; (2) the perpetrator asked for forgiveness and promised never to do it again or; (3) the perpetrator was punished or imprisoned. For survey respondents who were accused of a crime, having their name cleared led them to see their case as resolved and that justice was served.

Some respondents, however, tell that though their case ended in some form of resolution, they were still not able to achieve justice. For these respondents, their case had some form of resolution the moment the authorities were able to apprehend the suspect/s or when the authorities paid attention to their complaint. Justice however was not achieved because the perpetrator did not receive any form of punishment or is still at large.

Three respondents indicated that their cases did not end up in any form of resolution nor justice achieved. The resolution of the case and justice was not achieved due to the inability of authorities to act on the case and the inability of the authorities to capture suspect/s.

Summary

Summarizing the results from the survey, Bagong Silang is characterized by a high density of people, about double the average in Metro Manila. Unemployment rates run at around 45% and 66% of households live on an income that is below the national poverty line. While levels of trust generally remain high, people have few networks and they function better in relation to family than in relation to (1) work and

⁸ We identified 36 incidents of violence in 32 households. As we only interviewed the last victim in any given household, 32 members of households were interviewed about their justice seeking practices.

education and (2) community and political life. There is a disjuncture between perceived and actual occurrences of violence. Whereas people perceive violence to emanate from outside their immediate environment and to be perpetrated by young men organized in groups, actual levels of violence suggest that it emanates from within the community and is perpetrated by older men against the young.

In terms of risk factors (time, place and perpetrators) violence is more likely to happen in December and January and take place over weekends in the afternoon or in the evening. Furthermore, it will most likely be perpetrated by people known to the victim, even neighbours. One possible explanation might be that there is increased activity in the local communities during early evening, weekends and holiday seasons. This suggests a relationship between violence and community that we explore in more detail in Chapter 4. The survey results also indicate that there are relatively few state perpetrated incidents of violence. Furthermore, most people perceive the state's practices as to be expected. We will explore the issue of state violence in more detail in Chapter 5.

Finally, few people report the incidents to be adjudicated by the state. Rather, they seek local satisfaction in the form of apologies (mediation and adjudication is facilitated by interpersonal relationships rather than mechanisms of the state). Most of those who went to state agencies felt that they received some kind of justice. While most incidents were considered to be minor, they did have impact on people's lives, notably emotionally. Few suffered effects to their schooling or work. Although there were effects, no one went for medical attention following the violent incident. Hence, people seem to have coped individually rather than relying on the state.

Chapter 4: Community, Violence and Conflict in Bagong Silang

In this chapter, we explore the relationship between community, violence and conflict. As we showed in the previous chapter local understandings of community are central as they structure or animate how people perceive, experience and react to violence and conflict. Hence, such understandings must also be central when designing preventive and rehabilitative strategies. We begin by summarizing the relevant data from the quantitative survey. This shows that most violence is local despite perceptions that violence emanates from outside the local area. In the second section we introduce and analyse data from the *Lupon*, the local Barangay mediation forum, which every year collects and summarizes reports from the different phases. This data shows that most incidents of violence result from conflicts over debt and money issues, as well as from intra-communal conflicts between neighbours. The data from the *Lupon* and the survey are further interpreted through ethnographic participant observation and analysis. In the final sections of the chapter, we bring these multiple sources of data together with a theoretical approach inspired by constructivist analyses of community and politics to discuss the relations between community, violence and conflict.⁹ Through this analysis, we show that important local concepts of communal identities, obligations and survival (e.g. *pakikisama* and *diskarte*) are deeply politicized and not only aspects of cultural belonging. The discussion illustrates the paradoxical nature of everyday life where people prefer to keep to themselves but are forced to interact and trust (with precaution) their neighbours in order to get along and survive. This everyday life caught between the imperatives of survival and moral standards creates, we argue, a volatile context in which fraught and tense relationships might lead to violence in ways that are structured by generation and gender. Understanding how community, violence and conflict animate each other is central in order to suggest potential avenues for violence prevention in a place like Bagong Silang.

Quantitative findings on network, trust and violence

In the survey we defined 'community' as the 'block'. Inside this territory, respondents felt safe and they trusted most of the residents there, thinking that their neighbours would not take advantage of them, even if they had the chance to do so. Violence and danger is also perceived to emanate from outside the community. The further one gets away from the local community, respondents indicated, the greater is the likelihood of being victimized. The high level of trust is not extended to outsiders. In fact when asked about people outside their respective blocks, the respondents would say that they don't trust them and they are often cited as a source of trouble and criminal activity. However, the perceptions do not correspond to actual levels of violence. Contrary to these perceptions, most violence emanates from within the package (which consists of 3-5 blocks). In about half of the violent events reported in the survey, the attacker was from within the package and more than half of the perpetrators lived in the same package as the victim. One way to understand the discrepancy between what people perceive to be dangerous and reported levels

⁹ For a brief introduction to theories of community and politics, see Jensen (2004).

of violence is to look closer at the number of networks people have, their functioning and how respondents understand questions of trust.

Despite the general abstract assertion that those close by can be trusted whereas those further away cannot, people report very low levels of participation in and use of network. In fact, using verified Sascat¹⁰ indicators with a score between 0 and 8 and 0 and 9, the average scores were well below 1. This indicates that respondents are not members of many associations, nor have they sought the assistance of organizations or important individuals. This might indicate that they do not have need of organizations or assistance. It might, however, also indicate that most households keep to themselves rather than go outside the household to fulfil needs. Seen in this way, the figures suggest that households are rather autonomous. This interpretation is further substantiated when considering indicators for social functioning that are derived from the ICF categories introduced in Chapter 3. Whereas people engage with ease in 'family life', levels of functioning decreases in relation to 'work and education' and even more in relation to participation in 'community, social and political life'. In the latter category more than 64 per cent of respondents found it difficult, very difficult or impossible to participate.

That households are quite autonomous also emerges when revisiting the immediate findings around trust. During the verification exercise of the survey instrument, we piloted 75 households. In this test of the instrument, 95% reported that their neighbours would not take advantage of them if they had the chance. In the final version, this number dropped to 60%. The reason for the decrease was a slight change in the wording of the question emphasizing the hypothetical aspect. It turned out that people had interpreted the question as whether the neighbours could take advantage of them to which 95% said that this would not happen because they would take their precautions.¹¹ This suggests that people are quite wary of each other. They protect themselves through adopting preventive measures and keep to themselves. As we shall see later, this is captured in the use of the two opposite terms *pakikisama* (often translated as neighbourliness) and *abuso* (abuse of neighbourliness). The difference between the levels of trust and perceptions of violence as emerging from outside the intimate sphere on the one hand and the wariness that people exhibit towards their neighbours on the other hand might seem paradoxical at first. However, exploring how people negotiate communal conflicts helps understand the apparent contradiction.

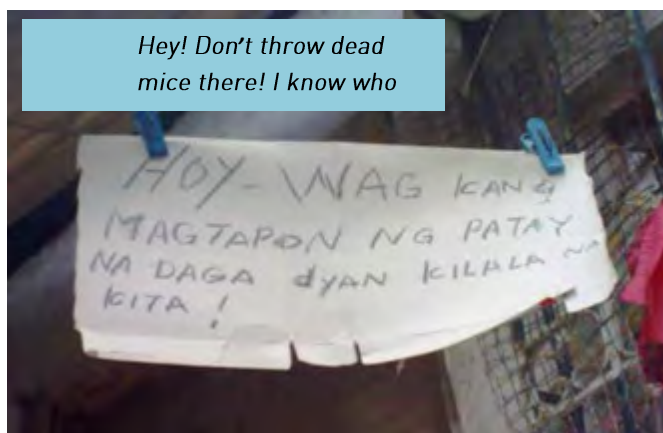


Photo by Karl Hapal

¹⁰ Ibid., n. 4

¹¹ The reason for the difference lies in the translation from English to Tagalog where 'if' and 'when' are both translated as 'kung'. In the second version, we used the word *kungwari* which stresses the hypothetical meaning.

Communal conflicts

One way to explore communal conflicts is to look at the figures from the Barangay Justice Office (in Tagalog *Katarungang Pambarangay* Office or KPAO). We explore the KPAO as part of the general policing structure of Bagong Silang in the next chapter. Suffice to say that the KPAO is part of the conflict resolution or mediation structure at local level instituted through the local government act that is quite unique to the Philippines. Each *purok* leader in the 115 packages that make up Bagong Silang are mandated to mediate in interpersonal and communal conflicts where the offenses are punishable by not more than one year of imprisonment, a fine not exceeding P5.000¹² or offenses concerning children.¹³ During 2008 to 2010 approximately 6,500 cases were annually reported to the *purok* leaders across Bagong Silang. When the *purok* leader is not able to mediate, the cases are referred to the KPAO and the *Lupon ng Barangay* (the Barangay mediation council). In 2008 and 2009 approximately 1500 cases were annually dealt with by the *Lupon*. These cases provide a privileged entry point to understand communal conflicts, as they are often conflicts between residents who know each other. The *Lupon* accounts are also better than the reports from the *purok* leaders because motives and cause of conflicts will have been established by the *Lupon* chairperson. In the following table we have divided the reports up into violent and non-violent conflicts.

Table: Annual reports of violent and non-violent cases

Cases	2008	%	2009	%	2010*	%	2010**	%	Ave%
Non-violent cases	998	66.71	1009	64.35	387	60.66	1161	60.66	63.91
Violent cases	498	33.29	559	35.65	251	39.34	753	39.34	36.09
Total number of cases filed	1496	100.00	1568	100.00	638	100.00	1914	100.00	100.00

Notes:

*The data reflects the number of cases handled by the *Lupon ng Barangay* from January 2010 to June 2010

**The number of cases handled by the *Lupon ng Barangay* from January 2010 to June 2010 was extrapolated to come up with a hypothetical number of cases handled at the end of the year. The current number of cases was divided into four (months) in order to have an idea of the monthly rate of cases handled by the LP. The number generated was then multiplied by 12 (months) to come up with an annual figure.

As we can see from the figures, approximately two thirds of all conflicts are non-violent and one third violent.¹⁴ In the *Lupon* records, violence includes for example slight physical injury, grave threats, assault of public authority and public disturbance. This violence often has local roots, as indicated in the excerpts below.¹⁵

A 35 year old man went to the office of the purok Leader because he was allegedly beaten up and attacked with an ice pick by three neighbours after a drinking session. Finally, he was able to escape from the three

¹² In cases where the offence is punishable by more than one year imprisonment or fines exceeding P5.000 the police must take over. Even in such cases, the complainant must have a letter from the *purok* leader to report the matter to the police.

¹³ Offences concerning children under the age of 18 are dealt with by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).

¹⁴ As the *Lupon* only hears cases that carry a penalty below one year sentence, serious forms of violence tend to fall outside these figures.

¹⁵ The following two cases are randomly chosen from among the 16.000 cases reported to the *purok* leaders.

men. The day after one of the three men and his wife went to the purok to lay a charge against the 35-year old for public disorder, assault and harassment going back some time, as there was already a bad relation between the two families

This incident correlates to the quantitative findings introduced above; it illustrates the extent to which conflicts are local and intimate and how they develop over time where one complaint will often be followed by a counter-complaint. Two thirds of conflicts handled by the *Lupon* are non-violent. They often relate to resources. This, in many ways, bears out the perception among residents that poverty is a serious concern, as much of the conflicts relate to issues of poverty. Resource conflicts include unpaid debts and loaning practices, theft, destruction of property, territorial disputes or fraud. The following describes one such a conflict, involving a family inside the survey area.

One female member, Violette, goes to the office of the Purok Leader to file a complaint about the theft of a cellular phone allegedly stolen by her drinking companions. The event was resolved with the promise that the phone would be replaced with a new phone. However, the next day the brother of Violette files a complaint against her for destruction of property. The event is not resolved. Harsh words are exchanged and the brother leaves with the hope that Violette will stop taking his possessions.

Table: Offences related to resources

	2008	%	2009	%
Offences related to resources	582	38,98	482	30,74
Offences unrelated to resources	911	61,02	1086	69,26
Total	1493	100	1568	100,00

The table illustrates that about one third of all conflicts relate to resources. In the *Lupon* reports resource-based complaints relate to theft, contractual issues, debt relations, interest rates and lot disputes. This must be seen in relation to the general level of poverty in Bagong Silang where survival is an ever-existing concern for people who subsequently engage in what in Tagalog is called '*Diskarte*'. This term, which also relate to the terms introduced above, *pakikisama* and *abuso*, will be discussed below in more detail.

While resource-based complaints are material in nature and relate to survival, another set of conflicts relates to problematic relations. Looking further at the data from the *Lupon ng Barangay* suggests that many conflicts concern slander and gossip. In the *Lupon* reports these forms of complaints are registered under for example 'slander', 'oral defamation' or 'unjust humiliation of honour'. As the following table shows, about one third of cases not related to resource conflicts fall within this category.

Table: Offences related to gossip

	2008	%	2009	%
Offences related to gossip	316	34,69	358	32,97
Offences unrelated to gossip	595	65,31	728	67,03
Total	911	100,00	1086	100,00

These figures are conservative because complaints about alarm and scandal, often associated with drinking sessions, might also result from different forms of personal humiliation. This kind of complaints relate to one final set of Tagalog concepts, *tsismis* (gossip) or *sabi-sabi* (hearsay). These concepts denote gossip or hearsay about people in the local area.

In summary, localized conflicts are common in Bagong Silang and their presence questions notions of trust and togetherness in everyday, localized life. About one third of the conflicts turns violent, and, correlating to quantitative findings, is often intimate and local. Many of the conflicts relate to resource issues, which confirm that matters of survival, inherent in notions of *diskarte* for example. Other conflicts relate to issues around gossip, rumours or other forms of verbal affront. This suggests that in communal life in Bagong Silang, conflicts, sometimes turning violent, co-exist with strong notions of trust and neighbourliness. To explore this in more detail, it is useful to revisit the spatial unit of the path walk, the central spatial entity for many residents around Bagong Silang.

The path walk

The path walk is the smallest but arguably the most important spatial unit. Each block, the smallest administrative unit, consists of three to four path walks. As shown in the photo below, the path walk is about three to four metres wide and lined with houses on both sides facing the path walk. Bagong Silang is made up of hundreds of these path walks, and most social life is carried out within their perimeters. As we noted in the survey, the average time of residence in Bagong Silang is a little more than fourteen years. As few have stayed more than 25 years (since the time of its construction as a resettlement site) Bagong Silang is a relatively stable area. Many people have lived within the confines of the path walk for years and therefore have intimate knowledge of the other people around. As houses are small and densely populated, life is often lived in the path walk, and people have intimate knowledge of the practices and activities of everyone else, including the sometimes informal practices of survival.



Photo by Elmer Malibiran

For instance, as we can see in the figure below mapping one path walk, fifteen households have ‘jumpers’ - illegal electricity connections, while others have no electricity. Several others are involved in illegal activities like drug peddling. One resident used to be a Barangay *tanod*, a guard associated to municipal policing structures (see next chapter). Several young men also belong to rivaling youth groups, the fraternities. However, despite these contradictions people have a real need to get along. This is how another *tanod* talked about the people in her path walk who were involved in illegal activities, an abortionist and a drug dealer.

I knew that Ken is a distributor of shabu (drugs) but it's not just for himself, he is able to help. Ken helped many people here. People run to him whenever they need help. No difference with the abortionist: we were supposed to target her but then we had an opportunity to know each other. She helped a lot of people so then I stopped.

Hence, people inhabit a world where life often contrasts dominant notions of morality. However, despite the obvious illegal nature of these activities, the localized forces of order, the local *tanod*, declined to act, not least out of what is referred to as *pakikisama*. This is the subject of the next section.

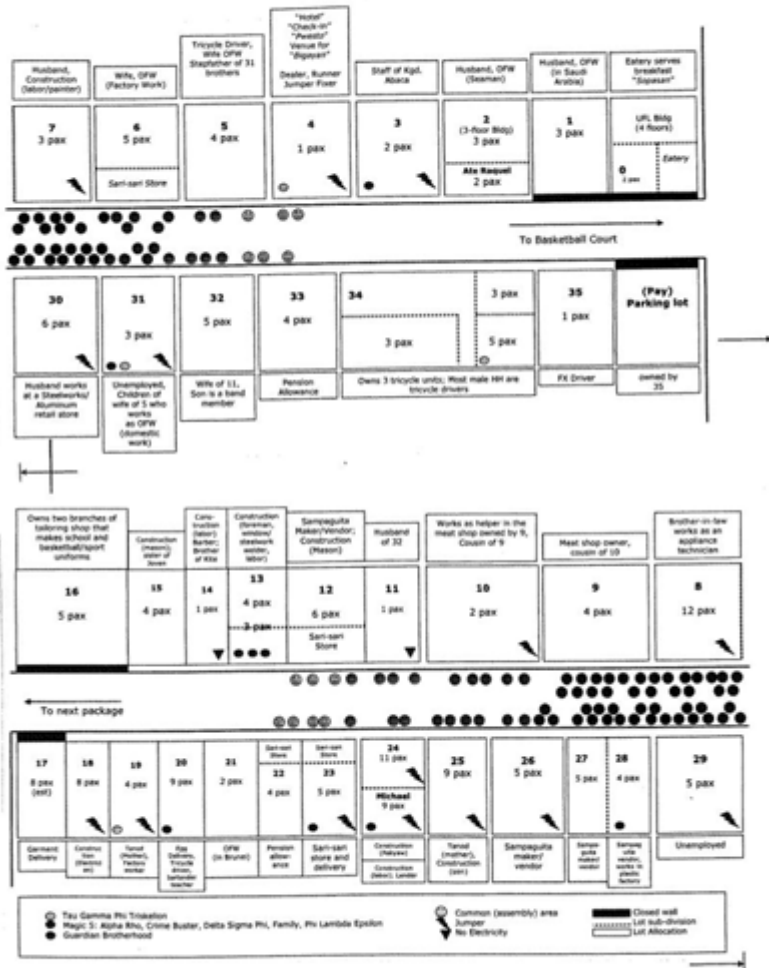


Figure 3: Example of path walk in Bagong Silang.
Key to Figure: Read figure from top right to the left and back from bottom left to the right.

Pakikisama versus Abuso

In this section we discuss *pakikisama* in relation to other concepts like abuse of intimacy (*abuso*) and survival (*diskarte*), as they emerged in our discussions with people in Bagong Silang. *Pakikisama* is a central concept in understandings of culture and identity in Bagong Silang and the rest of the Philippines. It is also inherently ambiguous, and, we would argue, sometimes slightly misunderstood in accounts of Philippine social life. Before we get to this and how it matters for understanding conflicts and violence, let us introduce the concept.

Marunong siya makisama! He (or she) really knows how to do *pakikisama*! Or again, this person is good at getting along with others. This is about as positive characteristics anyone can get, outsiders as well as insiders. It signifies the person's ability to engage positively with his or her neighbours, help them without expecting anything in return and be cordial and not feel superior. This is how one woman, Maricel, describes *pakikisama* as opposed to *diskarte*, which is the ability to survive in situations of adversity:

Diskarte is about how you would be able to live and earn a living every day. Pakikisama is a different thing. In Pakikisama it is when you are going to help. That's our way of helping, without wanting anything in return.

In relation to a particular neighbour who is said not to know *pakikisama*, she notes, "It's like whenever we're together, I want that we will be equal. Yes, I agree that she knew many things but if we're together she should know her place. She needs to learn to level with me".

Maricel is recognized as legendary in the difficult art of *pakikisama*. She continues:

Pakikisama has variety of meanings. We can say that it's pakikisama when we are here [talking as friends]. We drank together wherever. We're good with that, in sharing stories. But once someone asks help from you, and you'll use your diskarte so that you'll be able to help the people, by hook or by crook, it is real pakikisama. Also, if you desire to help a person out of pakikisama, you must do it. It is not enough to talk about it. I must be judged by my action, not by my words.

Hence, *pakikisama*, among other things, is also intimately linked to practices of helping rather than simply being cordial to those around you. However, there is more to *pakikisama* than just altruistic wishes to help; rather acts of *pakikisama* enter into an exchange economy. First, it is clear that Maricel helps because she also wants to be treated in the same way should she ever get into trouble. Furthermore, Maricel invokes the 'need' to help. In this lies a contradiction. Whereas help ideally might be said to denote benevolence and the intention to give without expecting anything in return, "need" evokes the opposite. This is a crucial element in how people in Bagong Silang talk about *pakikisama*. Rather than talk about the knowledge of *pakikisama* or the ability to be neighbourly, it might be more correct to talk about the need and obligation to do *pakikisama*. *Pakikisama* as obligation emerges out of a necessity to get along in order to survive and get along with people one knows from having a long history of suffering, friendship and conflicts with (captured in the concept of *pinagsamahan*). In this way, *pakikisama* is an investment in communal, social relations.

Intimacy is central in notions of *pakikisama*; it is about intimacy of space – the need to get along with people in a close and dense space, and it is about temporal intimacy – getting along with people that one has shared a long history with and will have to share most of the future with as well. In this way, community as *pakikisama* – as a central feature of communal life – denotes benevolence, necessity and obligation at the same time, and it is basically a term that relates to the communal conflicts that we have described above, not least as it is seen as a guard against conflicts. This corresponds to much of the literature on *pakikisama*. Frank Lynch (1973) defined it as the need for smooth interpersonal relations. In this way, Lynch notes that *pakikisama* is about avoiding conflicts and maintain face. The father of Philippine Psychology, Vergilio Enriquez focused more on the obligation and the potentially hierarchical connotations and defined *pakikisama*, *inter alia*, as the yielding to the leader or the majority, companionship, esteem and 'alter-fellow' (Enriquez 1992).

Despite the obvious merits of these discussions and definitions, they tend to focus on *pakikisama* as an almost objective fact of social life in Bagong Silang and beyond that, the concept is evoked to explain why people in the Philippines do as they do. Vergilio Enriques (1992: 56) likewise criticises this but ends up suggesting another term that better captures the Philippine psychology, *pakikipagkapwa*.¹⁶ Whichever concept one chooses, both arguably tend to essentialise Philippine culture (see also Sidel 1999). One way of avoiding essentialism is to look at how the concept is used in everyday life. Seeing the concept in a constructivist light suggests that the concept functions as the ideological marker of insider and outsider.¹⁷ Those who are said to know how to do *pakikisama* become insiders whereas those who are known to be incapable of *Pakikisama* face the real risk of exclusion of the intimate space and temporality of community. The extent to which people are ascribed the ability to do *pakikisama* marks the boundaries of inclusion or exclusion of the community. These identities are often negotiated through rumours and gossip in the path walk and as with local politics conducted through rumours and gossip, it is not always what one does that counts but how one is interpellated by others. This dynamic may be seen in the conflict Maricel had with Inday, the woman who Maricel mentioned (see above) as unable to do *pakikisama*. Inday defended herself and explained her alleged lack of *pakikisama* in the following way:

When I did pakikisama with them it was being abused (abusol), or actually it was my husband who did all the pakikisama yet it was being abused. My husband was permitting those things to do to him but for me it was an abuse of his pakikisama. It was an abuse because it was done many times. I think there are many other ways to show pakikisama like showing your respect to the person. Actually my husband was not really known here at first because he rarely stayed here. Now he was very famous to them because of that. But he was known in pakikisama due to his gambling activity. I told him that he was famous because he has money and when he has no money they will no longer call him. My husband is actually very good in pakikisama yet he was being abused because of it. He is known to be good in pakikisama.

In the excerpt, Inday goes back and forth on her and her husband's *pakikisama*. This relates to the domestic sphere or conflicts. Her husband's *pakikisama* resulted from his gambling and drinking, and how he shared with those around him. He worked outside the area and only came home once in a while where he would spend his money on himself and his neighbours'. Inday, on the other hand, confronted him in order for him to stop what she considered his wasting of scarce resources that could go towards sustaining the household including paying for expensive school tuition. This made her appear to the neighbours as someone without *pakikisama* while she stressed the abusive relationship and argued that *pakikisama* was also about respect for other people. This was not a perception of *pakikisama* that was widely accepted at that time and Inday's relationship with the path walk was strained. However, as an illustration of the negotiated and unstable character of *pakikisama*, it seemed that fortunes shifted one year later, as Maricel had lost her privileged position in the path walk while Inday had improved her status.

¹⁶ Vergilio Enriquez writes that his exploration into indigenous philosophy "has led to the identification of the value *pakikipagkapwa* [being with others] which is surely more important than *pakikisama*. The *barkada* (peer group) would not be happy with the *walang pakisama* but the Philippine society at large cannot accept the *walang kapwa tao*. *Pakikipagkapwa* is both a *paninindigan* (conviction) and a value.... *Pakikisama* is a form of *pakikipagkapwa* but not the other way around" (in Guevara 2004)). Our intention here is not to dispute the analysis by Enriquez, simply to say that *pakikipagkapwa* is not used on the streets of Bagong Silang whereas *pakikisama* is.

¹⁷ Theoretically, this is called an empty signifier (Laclau, Ernesto (1996) *Emancipation(s)*. Verso: London) within discourse analysis. It denotes that particular signifiers do not exist in a one to one relationship to the signified, that is, the object that it describes. The concept, like for instance, the concept of community or national identity is contested to the degree where it loses its self-evident meaning. Hence, there is a constant struggle to fill the concept with particular meaning.

This was to a large extent due to changes in the political life of Bagong Silang.¹⁸ These changes disadvantaged Maricel and gave Inday new political options that she pursued with vigour.

This case illustrates a number of features about *pakikisama* that are useful to our understanding of communal life. Although *pakikisama* is seen as a fundamental (essential) characteristic of communal life or personal quality in Bagong Silang by scholars as well as people living there, it is also a highly unstable signifier, subjected to local political struggles in which it is being employed as one of the central elements in determining insiders from outsiders.¹⁹

Inday's explanation of her husband's ability to do *pakikisama* also illustrates the extent to which the concept is gendered and, as Felipe Jocano (2002)²⁰ suggests, generational. Jocano notes that the concept is used to calm down young people when humiliated by older ones ("Get along with him/ her, s/he is old" (ibid: 199)). In Inday's comment we also note that in many instances *pakikisama* is tied up to practices outside the household in relation to neighbours, be that consumption of alcohol, gambling or political ties, which are often male activities. She, on the other hand, emphasizes respect and proper comportment. This means that although *pakikisama* is employed by both men and women, there is a specific gender dimension to it, as there is a potential tension between the prerogative of *pakikisama* and household survival. At the same time, *pakikisama* is viewed as essential also to household survival. It is these contradictions which emerged in the conflict between Maricel, Inday and Inday's husband.

Finally, there seems to be a hidden or obscured relationship between violence and *pakikisama*. *Pakikisama* clearly represents a positive and benevolent core of communal life, as people take the imperative to help others seriously. In this way, it forms part of people's ability to survive and their resilience in times of adversity. However, parallel to the benevolent side, *pakikisama* also may lead to violence. In the case of Inday, she was disciplined by her husband for not knowing the rules of (masculine) *pakikisama*. In her own explanation, she states that she does not accept the particular understanding of *pakikisama*; the one that is linked to consumption of alcohol which was also one of Enriquez' main objections to the term. This suggests that the gendered tension between household and communal life is real and potentially violent. *Pakikisama* is also related to violence and conflict in a more complex way. As we saw in the survey and from interviews with policing structures, most violence takes place between people who know each other with the old victimizing the young at times when many people are present in the path walk (weekends in the middle of the day). These periods are privileged moments for the exercise of *pakikisama*. In this way violence is *de facto* obscured, as it is perpetrated by adult men who, like Inday's husband, are the prime performers of *pakikisama* against outsiders, youngsters and women. In this way, community and notions of *pakikisama* become battle zones on which a gerontocratic patriarchy still holds sway.

Community, Violence and Conflict Revisited

In this chapter we have explored aspects of the relationship between community, violence and conflict as they played themselves out in Bagong Silang. This is an important issue for the prevention of violence

¹⁸ In the Barangay elections in 2010, Captain Padilla lost the election to Kuya Inar (brother Inar). As we describe in the next chapter, this meant that *puroks* were replaced and Maricel lost her position. Parallel to this, the new Captain initiated a consultative forum where Inday managed to involve herself.

¹⁹ For a similar analysis on the concept of community in South Africa and India see Jensen (2004) and Agraval (2004) respectively.

²⁰ Although it also essentializes culture in certain aspects, Felipe Jocano's book, 'Slum as a way of life', originally published in 1975, still stands as the best ethnography of urban life in the Philippines.

because contrary to perceptions, violence happens inside local communities and is mostly perpetrated by insiders against insiders. Looking at the data, trust and autonomy go hand in hand inside the very dense and intimate path walks that make up life in Bagong Silang. Drawing on reports from the *puroks* and the mediation forum the *Lupon*, we see that about 1/3 of the conflicts turn violent and that the conflicts (violent and non-violent) concern struggles over scarce resources and affronts to dignity. However, community life is ideologically constructed around the notion of *pakikisama*. This emic concept invokes notions of neighbourliness, friendliness and the ability but also need to get along with those around you. As one respondent exclaimed; “We have no choice. We live here and they [our neighbours] live here as well. We just need to get along with them.” However, *pakikisama* also denotes a terrain in which insiders and outsiders are produced. To be acknowledged as one who knows how to do *pakikisama* equals being an insider whereas someone constructed as not able to do *pakikisama* faces the risk of exclusion from the local polity. In this way, *pakikisama* is central to local politics. The concept is arguably also a gendered, generational term in which some men are in a better position to assert authority in the path walks. To some extent this generational and gendered dimension to *pakikisama* explains how the relationship between community and violence is rendered invisible, as the violence is perpetrated by those (mainly men) who are ‘good at doing *pakikisama*’. In this way, community is not only a unitary element of social cohesion in the face of misfortune. It is also part of the maintenance of community as a battle ground on which a gerontocratic patriarchy still holds sway. In relation to intervention, this is an important realization. It suggests that interventions should help to unpack and reflect on those community dynamics that potentially produce, legitimize or obscure violence.

Chapter 5: Policing Bagong Silang

In this chapter we explore how Bagong Silang is policed, by whom and the relationship between violence and policing. In Chapter 3 it emerged that in quantitative terms, state perpetrated violence is relatively limited. Of the 400 questionnaires administered we registered few counts of state perpetrated violence. Other data, which we will return to below, confirms this finding. Parallel to this finding, however, there are reports – some of which have reached local and national media – of rather extreme forms of state killings and torture. The apparent contradiction is also borne out in perceptions of the law enforcement agencies where few people cite the state as the most likely perpetrator while citing state killing – known as *salvaging* – as the most feared form of violence. Hence, in this chapter we explore how policing works in Bagong Silang and the extent to which and how it relies on the use of illegitimate violence. State violence is also a central concern for both Balay and DIGNITY, working within the framework of the United Nations' Convention Against Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and/ or Punishment (UNCAT). This convention covers exactly illegitimate forms of violence carried out by or with the consent or acquiescence of state officials. Knowledge about policing violence is central to intervention in Bagong Silang, be they advocacy, violence prevention or psycho-social support.

We begin by introducing the complex system of policing in Bagong Silang, which straddles formal and informal state practices; family ties and legal requirements and involves the national police as well as local government policing structures. We show that far from being derived from the legal codes that are said to guide policing, policing is a system that relies on personal connections, private (rather than public) aspirations and situated context. Then we introduce the quantitative findings of the victimization survey presented in Chapter 3 and other data to illustrate how violence forms an integral part of policing. In the third and fourth section, we explore violent and illegitimate policing practices through ethnographic fieldwork, observations in police training carried out by Balay and interviews. Where section three is dedicated to everyday forms of policing violence, section four attends to the rare but significant occurrences of extreme forms of policing violence like extra-judicial killings and torture.

Policing Structures in Bagong Silang

In our analysis of policing in Bagong Silang we use the term 'policing' rather than limit our discussions to the national police because most maintenance of law and order is carried out by local government structures, the so-called Barangay Justice System (*Katarungang Pambarangay*). This system includes 115 *purok* leaders (area leaders) and 1150 *tanods* (guards) as well as the *Lupon ng barangay* (the mediation office). It is the first step in the criminal justice system in the Philippines, which is rather unique in the world (Asian Development Bank 2009). It was originally established to un-clot the formal court system, as well as to introduce a culturally intelligible system of conflict mediation. The Barangay Justice system has jurisdiction in less serious criminal cases carrying a penalty of less than one year imprisonment or a fine of less than PHP5,000. Cases that involve children, land and real estate conflicts, corruption cases and cases involving people from different local government structures are also dealt with by other legal entities. Between 2008 and 2010 more than 20,000 cases were heard by the Bagong Silang Barangay Justice system. Most of the cases were dealt with at the lowest level of the system, that is, at the level of

the *purok*. In 2008 and 2009, about 3000 cases (about one in four) were referred from the level of the *purok* to the level of the Barangay and the *Lupon*, which is a mediating mechanism. In one area of fieldwork, not one single case made it from the level of the *purok* to the *Lupon*. The settling of conflicts often happens through a *kasunduan* (pledge or agreement). As we saw in Chapter Four, most cases involve issues of debt, neighbourhood brawls (*away*) and conflicts within families and they are settled by the *purok* leader.

Apart from the Barangay Justice System, the Barangay Captain in Bagong Silang has also instituted the Task Force, which includes a rapid response team to assist *purok* leaders in cases of violence. The Task Force consists of twenty members that also perform adjudication (like the *purok* leaders) as well as enforce bye-laws on traffic and street vending.

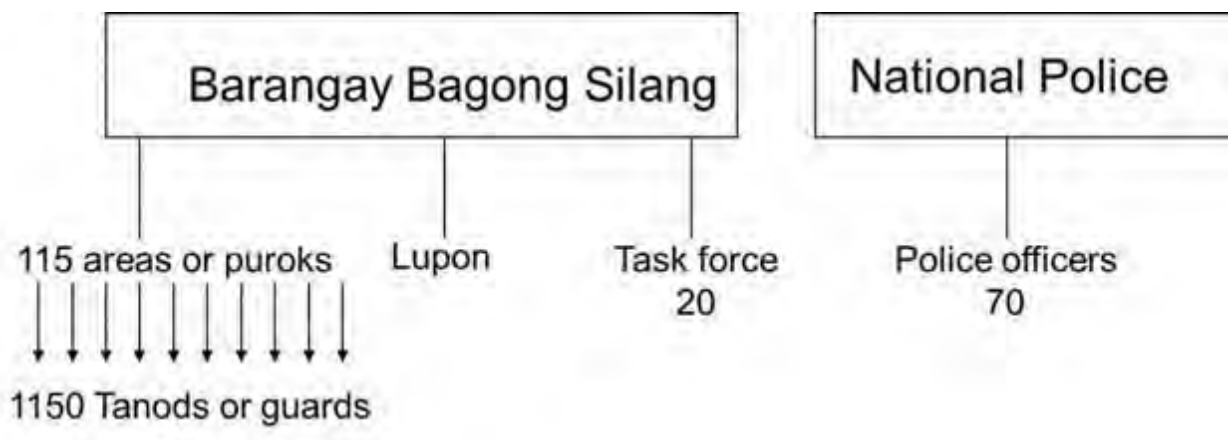


Figure 4: Policing structures in Bagong Silang

Only few cases ever reach the 70 police officers that are seriously outnumbered by the *tanods*, *puroks* and the Barangay task force. The national police (PNP) are present in Bagong Silang in 3 sub-stations under the Caloocan City Police. However, while the PNP is national, like the other policing structures, it is also under the influence of local political structures. Legislation and operational manuals come from the central government, but the PNP is also directly answerable, in this case, to the mayor of Caloocan City. The mayor may also influence the appointments made in the police. In terms of resources, police officers are paid by the national government, as are the cost of running police stations. However, allowances and other financial support may come from the City as do extra resources like vehicles. Hence, in Caloocan City police vans are marked 'Response Community' with the RE and the COM highlighted in reference to Mayor Recom Echeverri. Police vehicles also participated in the Echeverri campaign in the run up to the elections in 2010.

While this does not mean that the PNP takes direct orders from politicians, the world of policing and the world of local politics are intimately intertwined. This is part of a long tradition in the Philippines. The Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship signalled the introduction of a different kind of politicized policing as the police was centralized and used to fight opposition. To address the legacy of Marcos, one of the first decisions of the Cory Aquino government was to devolve power of policing back to local government structures (Sidel 1999). The political control over the Barangay justice system is also pervasive. *purok*

leaders and *tanods* are supposedly officers of the peace. However, they are also clients of their political patron, the Barangay Captain (and often the Mayor as well). Hence, they are called upon and expected to play part in political rallies and functions especially around election time. They are explicitly told that failure to support their patron will mean that the state apparatus will not pay their honorarium. This merging of politics and state resources – like when the mayor uses police cars in political campaigns or when state employees are told to participate in political rituals of their masters – are stable elements in Philippine political culture. One possible consequence is that the political clients might find it hard to critique (supporters of) their patrons to whom they owe allegiance, job and pay. Political patronage is mostly organized around families. Barangay Captain Padilla and Mayor Recom belong to two competing political families. The *purok* leader and therefore the *tanods* depend on the political fortunes of their patron. In the 2010 Barangay elections, Padilla lost and as a consequence, most *purok* leaders were replaced. The importance of family has made anthropologist Timothy Austin (1999) talk about a Philippine ideology of familism and historian Al McCoy (1999) about ‘Anarchy of family’. The blatant appropriation of state resources, including for policing, by families does not happen at the expense of the state. Rather state authority and legitimacy is articulated through families and vice versa. The strength of the state lies in its ability to be co-opted by and to co-opt powerful families, that is, the state and political families, in a number of ways, “benefit” each other.

The ideology of familism is played out on all levels of the system, also at the level of the *purok*. If we look at the overall profile of the 1150 *purok* and *tanods* in Bagong Silang between 2007 and 2010, several important trends emerge. Firstly, about 65% are older (between 40 and 60) and about 70% are male. This suggests, maybe unsurprisingly, that policing perpetuates a gender system where fathers are policing the young and the women (see Chapter 4 for a similar conclusion on community). Furthermore, the profile also indicates that *puroks* and *tanods* stay close to each other and that their names are often the same. These two elements suggest that they are often related to each other or are neighbours. As we showed in Chapter 4, knowing each other affects the ways in which policing is carried out. The numbers from the profile are conservative because they do not take into account all other kinship relations apart from those where people share names. If we look at specific *puroks* where we did fieldwork in one case 3 sons of the *purok* were *tanods* while in another case, 4 direct relatives of the *purok* worked as *tanods*. While such examples might be extreme in how intimate and related *puroks* and their *tanods* are, it is an example of the level of close ties. To sum up, any given area tends to be policed by one family or people who know each other well, that all owe allegiance to the same political patron and who stays close to each other working under the influence of *pakikisama*.

Let us provide one ethnographic illustration of how intimacy works in complex ways, where neighbourliness and local history often take precedence over policing requirements. In one area the local *purok* leader owed his position to close church relations to Captain Padilla. Beside the *purok* leader, three of his children are *tanods*. The sons have a reputation of rowdiness when they drink, which they do quite often. One afternoon, the one son got into a fight and ended up stabbed in the arm. The circumstances around the incident was uncertain with the *purok* family insisting that it was a case of mistaken identity and others claiming that this was part of a debt conflict. After the fight, the family went to the police to file a case, as it was outside the jurisdiction of the *purok* leader – in any case himself. However, in the days that followed the parents of the stabber visited the family on several occasions to make them drop the case. During these visits they invoked several concepts that all speak to issues of intimacy: The stabber

was a *kababata*, that is, someone the brother grew up with; they had *pinagsamahan*, that is, a common history, and they invoked the notion of *pakikisama*. The family finally succumbed and dropped the case because of the demands of *pakikisama* that especially a *purok* leader cannot afford to ignore.

To sum up, firstly policing is not just about law and order. It seems clear that dichotomies of legality and illegality, state and civil society are constantly blurred through political processes that relate family and the state in complex ways. Secondly, policing in Bagong Silang relies on politically elected families. To have a conflict with these families might not be very comfortable. However, and as third point, people living in these areas have to negotiate local intimacies that are hard to ignore, even and maybe especially for the forces of order. In at least the cases we know the intimacy makes them accountable to the local population and because political fortunes change, potentially leaving *puroks* and *tanods* out of a job, their position of power is not secured and they cannot afford to act inappropriately as that might return to haunt them later.

Violence and Policing

In this section, we explore the levels and nature of state violence in Bagong Silang, as well as people's perceptions of state violence. As we saw in Chapter Three, general levels of violence in Bagong Silang is low: only 31 or 7.7% of the households surveyed indicated that they have experienced violent episodes in the period of from 2008 to May 2010. Out of the 31 only six indicated the state as the main perpetrators of violence. These cases were all relatively mild, and there were no cases of torture or extra-judicial killings. Out of the six, only three were identified through uniform or ID as representing the state. In one case, subsequent interviews revealed that the attacker was a police officer in plain clothes as he had been suspended from duty. The respondent knew this because he had had earlier run-ins with the police officer. This underlines the quite intimate forms of policing in Bagong Silang. Popular perception also reflects the same. When asked who is the most frequent perpetrator in their community only 4% of the respondents indicated state agents. Most of the respondents cited organized groups such as gangs and fraternities as the main perpetrators of violence, something which the survey also revealed to be wrong as the main perpetrators are older men from within the community of the victim (see Chapter Four).

Other records indicate equally low numbers of cases involving agents of the state. The records of the *Lupon ng Barangay*, the main adjudicating body of the Barangay, indicate that out of the 3,702 cases filed in their office from 2008 to May 2010, only 21 (0.57%) cases are state perpetrated. The records of the People's Law Enforcement Board (PLEB) reflect more or less the same picture. The PLEB's records show that from the year 2008 to May 2010, only 12 cases were filed against members of the Police of which six were dismissed. PLEB serves as the central receiving (and adjudicating) entity for complaints against members of the police. Of the 12 cases, nine were about grave misconduct, two included extortion, one case involved trespassing, unlawful arrest and abuse of authority. Only one case involved physical injury.

However, a slightly more complex – and worrying – picture emerges when looking at the numbers in more detail. As noted in Chapter Three, when asked how people rated different government agencies' attempts to prevent violence, two-thirds of the people said that it was 'normal'. This translates into a general notion of how government is regarded. When we went back to talk to people about their responses and what they had meant when they answered the question, they replied in Tagalog '*ok lang*', which translates into 'just ok'. In this way informants suggested that the state performance was 'as expected'. As we shall see below, people expect the police to be violent and corrupt, hence '*ok lang*', which means that the behaviour of the

police was not excessive or out of the ordinary – not something to be complained about. It can be negotiated and managed through *diskarte* or money. Following from this less positive note, people interviewed for the survey also expressed fear about excessive police violence. In the first round of interviews when asked about the most likely perpetrators, many people understood the question as the worst forms of violence and they noted ‘salvaging’ (extra-judicial killings), a feared weapon of the police that was introduced during Marcos’ time as a means of taking out opponents or enemies of the regime. These images of extreme forms of police violence still persist in the minds of people in Bagong Silang. State counter-insurgency strategies and extra-judicial killings still occur and in many ways, criminal and political enemies are largely seen in the same light and acted upon in the same way. It is to these two forms of state violence – the ‘*ok lang*’ and the excessive – that we now turn.

***Ok Lang* – Everyday Forms of Police Violence**

While the police and the Barangay Justice System are often seen in a relatively benevolent light and people will use the systems to adjudicate conflicts, people do so with reservations about efficiency of the systems along with more negative attitudes regarding especially corruption and extortion. In the vernacular of everyday life, the police are referred to as *buwaya* (crocodiles) or *linta* (leeches), both words that point to the extortionist inclinations of the police. The capacity to extort money is based on police ability to threaten with and ultimately use violence, including unlawful arrest. Let us provide some ethnographic detail to this.

The son of Lita had been taken in by the police who suspected that the eight year old boy had been shop-lifting. Lita went to the police station and tried to free her son. The commanding officer at the sub-station refused to let him go but volunteered to beat up the boy to discipline him into behaving better – the assumption being that Lita could not raise her child and that she needed assistance. Lita kindly declined the offer, saying that she would discipline him herself. She then repeated her request to bring the boy home. The commanding officer said, “no, but you know a car does not run on nothing”, thereby indicating that there was a price to be paid for the son’s release. Lita asked how much and he mentioned, up in the air, that PHP500 might help. Lita said that she did not have that kind of money but that she would return the day after when she had gathered the money. Lita waited for the commanding officer to leave for the day and then returned to the police station. She told the officer in charge that she had arranged with the first police officer to pay PHP200 for the son’s release. The second officer noted that this was cheap and that his colleague normally asked more. Lita said that he could just check with the first officer. He didn’t and Lita could take his son home on a discounted rate.

This story illustrates several points. Firstly, corruption is systemic and many officers are complicit in the system although arguably not all police officers participate in it. It is routinized to an extent that a release almost has a price tag attached to it.²¹ The term for this kind of police behaviour is *hulidap*. *Hulidap* combines the verbs *huli* (arrest) and hold-up. It designates the practice of police holding up people through the threat of arrest. Secondly, it illustrates what people mean when they say that it is *ok lang*. Lita was able to negotiate her terms with the police and even use her *diskarte* (the ability to survive difficult situations) to improve the deal. Thirdly, children and young people are often likely victims and gateways to their parents’ purse. Finally, the police officer points to his perception that violence is necessary in

²¹ For an analysis of policing and corruption in South Africa, Vigneswaran, D., & Hornberger J. (2009). *Beyond Good Cop / Bad Cop: Understanding Informality and Police Corruption in South Africa*. FMSP Research Report. 1-65.

disciplining of children and his own perceived role in meting out this discipline. In interviews with this officer, he thus recounted several stories of the success of this approach in reforming deviant children. Lita did obviously not agree with his reading and preferred to discipline her son herself. This is also visible in the survey where we presented people to several scenarios when it was ok for the police to use violence. While the approval of police violence towards known adult criminals was 24%, it decreased to single digits in relation to violence against children regardless of whether they were known criminals. In other words, this violence is considered excessive, not *ok lang*. This is not to say that people in Bagong Silang do not consider violence to be purifying and a central means of discipline as attested to by rather extreme forms of initiation rituals in fraternities (Jensen forthcoming) or parental violence employed in bringing up children. Parents just don't necessarily want the police to do it.²² We will return to the third and fourth point (that children are the likely victims of state violence and that violence is necessary in discipline) below as they point towards understanding the rationality behind excessive state violence.

A second example of police extortion finds its point of departure in the illicit gambling practice *sabong* (cock fighting). A feature across South East Asia (Geertz 1972), it is a gambling activity central to the performance of masculinity. Its prohibition outside certain circumstances and areas is therefore a perfect place for the police to make money. During Holy Week in 2010, a number of men had organized a *sabong* as a fundraising event. It was destined to last for the entire week and men would come with their fighting cocks from inside and outside Bagong Silang. The benevolent purpose and the semi-official nature of the event made the Barangay authorities ambivalent about the event, as its cancellation would be enormously unpopular with an important voting segment, the older men, commanding the votes of their entire families. However, the police were not late to seize the opportunity, something the organizers of the *sabong* very well knew. Consequently, they placed a woman, incidentally a *tanod* (who at this time transformed into the wife of one of the organizers), at the main road. Police officers would come by. The woman would ask how many they were. Armed with the figure she went to the organizers who gave her money to pass on to the waiting police. "Sometimes the same police would come by several times a day. They even came from Caloocan South because the rumour had spread". During one of the last days of Holy Week, police decided to place a bet in the *sabong*. They lay their bet for a cock that ultimately was conquered and they lost their money (according to rumour about PHP5000). At this moment they turned into undercover-cops on a mission to stop the *sabong* and began arresting people. The men involved in the *sabong* tried to flee but about twenty people – the maximum capacity of a jeepney – were arrested in the 'undercover' operation and taken to a local holding cell. The police initially 'asked' PHP3000 but several detainees were able to settle for less while others got off scot-free. Only the best-off were made to pay the full price.

This event illustrates many of the points made above. Police use arrest as a means to extort money. People can negotiate their terms with the police. Hence, it is manageable and to be expected. The case also illustrates that prohibition and laws are not necessarily enforced but rather used as opportunity for making money. Similar events unfold at road blocks and in traffic. Again, this is to be expected and counter-measures can even be planned like placing a *tanod* at the road to act as intermediary. In the weeks after the event, people had a good laugh about it until it turned out that one of the local people had

²² As Hornberger (2011) and Jensen (2009) illustrate, this is markedly different in South Africa where people expect the police to use violence.

stolen some of the money collected to “bail” out the men. If, however, the police had mistreated or tortured the detained men, it would have been a case of excessive violence. It is to this topic we now turn.

Excessive Violence – beyond *Ok Lang*

In the previous section, we argued that practices such as *hulidap* are part of what we call “everyday policing”. These practices inherently rely on violence as they involve the use of force or coercion in order to extract money or things (i.e. cellular phones) from the victim. At least for some residents of Bagong Silang, these practices are not considered out of the ordinary – a nuisance that one can manage through the use of money or mobilizing one’s networks to facilitate the ‘transaction’. However, apart from these practices of everyday police violence, another form of state perpetrated violence happens in Bagong Silang that goes far beyond the people’s notion of *Ok lang*. These cases are of course notoriously difficult to document and prove. Hence, the following two examples are pieced together from a string of different sources: newspaper articles, police reports, Balay’s documentation of cases, interviews and informal conversations with police officers. Although our account of the cases cannot work as proof, they provide a window into discussing and understanding police brutality. The first story concerns the torture of José while the second case relates to the murder of Aris.

Around eight o’clock at night, José, Marlon and Renato went to a man who owed José money. José brought a gun and he asked Marlon and Renato to be his ‘back-up’. While walking to the house of the man, the three young men accidentally bumped into a police officer. He searched them and discovered José’s gun. Marlon and Renato ran while Jose was detained by the police officer, who called him a *holdaper* (robber) out loud. Consequently, on the way to the police station, people on the street, tired of the perceived danger of the *holdapers* attacked him.²³ When he arrived at the police station, he was allegedly beaten up repeatedly. The police presented him with a paper with names on it. His interrogators asked where these people were staying. The next morning, José, badly beaten and weak was taken to the main police station in Monumento, the main police station in Caloocan where a case was filed against him. While inside the Caloocan City Jail, he considered filing a torture case against the police who maltreated him. However, as he feared reprisals against his family, he could not make up his mind. As for his two companions, they were later found dead. A news article that took notice of the incident dubbed the murder of the two ‘a drug deal gone wrong’, while serious suspicions lingered that they had died at the hands of the police.

In the second case, Aris was found dead in the neighbouring province across the Marilao River. His body was terribly mutilated as witnessed by photographic evidence and eye witness reports. He was only identified coincidentally as an official in the province where his body was found had heard of a missing person in Bagong Silang. Shortly after stories began to circulate that a law enforcement unit had detained him. Other witnesses testified that they had seen a hooded person being put into a van and driven away. At this point the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) entered the case and began investigating the allegations. Officials of the law enforcement agency were suspended. After investigating the case, the NBI forwarded a case of murder and kidnapping to the court system. One of the national television channels also aired a programme about the death of Aris. At his funeral mourners carried placards demanding

²³ This goes against the conclusions from the survey where people indicated that it was not ok for the police to beat up suspects. We tend to think that respondents in the survey probably thought it was the right thing to oppose police violence rather than speak their minds regarding the victimizability of robbers. Hence, one woman noted, “It’s ok they are beaten up. They are bad people”.

'Justice'. In the months following the incident, tarpaulins showing Aris' mutilated body were exhibited in a central part of Bagong Silang (see figure below). The text on the tarpaulins demanded justice for all, even if they were engaged in criminal activity. One of the mourners, a distant relative to Aris, elaborated, "even if you are *holdaper* like Aris no one deserves to die like this. That's what we wanted to say." A police officer we interviewed (who was not implicated in the murder of Aris) suggested that the law enforcement agency had picked up Aris so many times before but had had to release him again because he was below the age of eighteen. This time, he guessed, they wanted to teach him a lesson – a lesson that then went wrong. In his account, the bodily mutilation and disappearance were attempts to hide the torture and the killing.



Photo by Steffen Jensen, tarpaulin of Aris in Phase 2, Bagong Silang

The cases of José and Aris are revealing in several ways. Firstly, it seems clear that the fact that they were related to criminal activity made them victimizable in the eyes of the police and even public opinion as in the case of José. While this clearly does not exonerate the state officials or legitimize their actions, José and Aris' actions made it easy to target them. Secondly, as the survey also shows there is a general perception that young men are particularly problematic and prone to violence. Rendering this worse, in the eyes of the law enforcement agents, is the fact that they cannot arrest them but have to release them into the care of parents and social workers. This is due to a Republic Act (RA 9344) also called the Juvenile Justice Act of 2006 that stipulates that minors under the age of 18 cannot be detained in jail but must be put into youth shelters. However, as they are often full, the youngsters are released. Asked about this, one law enforcement officer noted, "They (the below 18s) are not innocent and they are in fact using the law to do crime without punishment. As soon as they are released we can pick them up again". He continued, "There is very little protection for my men and other civilians in human rights. They only protect the

criminals”.²⁴ This sense of impotence arguably entices law enforcement officers to engage in extrajudicial, that is, outside the parameters of the law, activities that are legitimized in the name of protecting the normal law abiding citizens from people like José and Aris.

José and Aris’ cases are in all likelihood not isolated incidents. Based on Balay’s documentation in Bagong Silang, torture and salvaging are alleged to happen on a regular basis and in an organized manner. In the first half of 2011, through word of mouth and through networks, Balay was made aware of five cases of alleged extra-judicial killings and two cases of torture by Barangay officials. While these cases are not proven, some of them are supported by evidence beyond hear-say. Furthermore, the reports only cover a quarter of Bagong Silang and it is likely that there would be similar accusations elsewhere in Bagong Silang. One law enforcement officer confirmed the practice: “I won’t lie about it. We do kill people. I myself have killed a lot of people in Bagong Silang.” He continues to explain how ‘code 00’ signals an imminent summary execution to other officers, for example “let’s code 00 this guy! This is why he and other policemen always carry a *paltik* (homemade gun) or have a sharp pointed weapon at hand. In this way they can make a killing appear random and not carried out by the Police. At other times, bodies are intentionally dumped in crowded places with cards hanging around the neck of the victim to send a message to other criminals. These practices (of salvaging and torture) are known and sanctioned by their superiors: “Let’s just put it this way. Every action that we do, our superior knows about it.”

While these statements are truly worrying, we need to be careful not to take them at face value. The officer seems to be narrating the police and himself as powerful and vengeful agents, organized in strict hierarchies of death. In this way, the narrative resembles the narrative about the strong, effective but gruesome military organizations under Marcos. The statements are therefore arguably part of a narrative structure of strength and nocturnal secrets. This is not to say that the killings and the torture do not happen. Rather, one could suspect that they are not always carried out in the ordered, disciplined and effective manner the law enforcement agent would like them to be.

Why do law enforcement need to carry out these excessive acts of violence and render them intelligible through the narrative of the effective but gruesome policing structure? Another law enforcement officer explains this by evoking a sacred and epic fight between good and evil:

The people we put down are not people anymore. They are demons that need to be removed from the face of the earth. We the police are like angels that battle those demons. We know what is right and we know that what those criminals do is not right. I am not afraid to die today. If I die today, I have the courage to justify to my God that I have done the right thing. I will even wish to be put in the front lines of his army to battle those demons. If He wishes that I be in hell, I have no problem with that. I have no regrets about the things that I did.

In this view, society is composed of ‘peaceful and productive citizens’. However, there are also demons, causing havoc on ordinary people’s lives – criminals, deviants and misfits of society. The demons disrupt the peace and do damage to innocent people. The role of the police is, predictably, like avenging angels, to eliminate the demons in order to protect society.

²⁴ This echoes police complaints about human rights across the world. They use almost identical words to describe their opposition to human rights. For South Africa, see Marks 2005.

Another law enforcement agent continues along similar lines:

Torture, it happens here. We do it but we don't do it unless we are very sure. Before we do it, we make sure that the person we pick up is the right one [...] We have ways to torture people where there would be no marks to the body of the person so there won't be any basis for any accusations of torturing or beating people up.

Again, while there is no reason to doubt the violent practices or the notion that violence is necessary in policing Bagong Silang, one might question the assertion that violence is meted out in predictable, effective and almost scientific ways. To understand the discrepancy between violent practices and the narrative about them, we need to see policing in Bagong Silang in its context. Contrary to the findings in the survey, Bagong Silang is perceived to be a hotbed of criminal activities, gang violence and immorality. In this world, the authority of the police seems at best challenged and at worst compromised. Police officers would despondently talk about how difficult it was to catch *holdapers* because they disappeared in the maze of houses and life. Local people complained incessantly about the ineffectiveness of the police while they refused to share knowledge with the police about neighbours, families and friends who were engaged in criminal activity: "How can we police under these circumstances? And yet, we are blamed when there is a crime", as one officer exclaimed. Having to police 250,000 people (the rumoured numbers go up to one million) with only 70 officers, very few cars and little resources makes policing precarious and with a profound sense of impotency. In this light the thin blue line (the police) protecting order from chaos would seem stretched and porous. It is in this sense that we must understand the effectiveness of a narrative that stresses that justice will prevail, through the nocturnal death of the criminals, by the hands of secret and strong forces of order.

The idea of the thin blue line is shared in many policing organizations across the world, as is the notion that violence is necessary to carry out what they see as their duty. Similarly shared is the notion that criminals have forfeited their rights to live through their criminal activities. In a world dominated by human rights discourses, the logic goes; the police need to use extraordinary measures to combat the evil. South African Minister for the police once famously noted, "Criminals must know that the South African Police possesses the authority, moral and political, to ensure by all means, constitutional or unconstitutional, that the people of this country are not deprived of their human rights" (Mail and Guardian, 10 November 2000). Echoing the first officer quoted above, the world is divided into two where the one part has lost the right to life and will be summarily killed, even if it infringes on his human rights.

The notion of violence as necessary is central to at least the Philippine National Police (PNP), if not task force and *purok* leaders. It is central to the PNP's self-perception as having saved the nation, hence history as salvaging in the nation's fight against Maoist, Islamic or Moro insurgencies. For example, in August 2011, a video posted on the internet showed police trainees being subjected to hazing (see Figure 2). At the start of their training, trainees are subjected to violence. The persistence of these rituals despite their ban was confirmed by one police officer. According to him, police aspirants are subjected to violence in order to harden them and make them capable of engaging in acts of violence when they are eventually put in the real world – of criminals and insurgents.²⁵ Apart from inculcating the need for violence and produce candidates capable of using it, this form of training also reinforces the police narrative of the bifurcated world of demons and angels and the militarized and ordered hierarchy of which they form part.

²⁵ Interestingly, young men in fraternities and gangs, often the sworn enemies of the police, also engage in hazing rituals.



Figure 5: Hazing rituals in the police

While this epic tale functions to render violence morally defensible, often the actual violence is much less heroic. This is where it is useful to recapitulate to the section on everyday policing violence which positions violence in the often abusive and extortionist everyday relations between police and policed and where police are referred to as crocodiles. Through the epic narrative, these practices are obscured and rendered at least partially invisible. The epic narrative transforms the crocodile into an angel while legitimizing violence. But it is not only the angel that is transformed in the everyday practices of policing; also the demon changes character and becomes a *gago* or an asshole. The figure of the asshole is also known throughout the world of policing. John van Maanen (1978) famously noted that the police divide people into three overarching categories. First, there is the 'peaceful, productive citizen' mentioned above, whom it is the police' job to protect. Secondly, there are the usual suspects, known criminals. Often the police and they will have a cordial and professional relation to each other ('Ok, officer, you caught me this time, but next time I will get away' to which the officer laughs knowing full-well that the criminal is right). Finally, there is the category of the asshole, the one who does not accept or buy the police' definition of any given situation and will not pay the police the respect to which he thinks he is entitled. The asshole does not need to be a criminal for him or her to be an asshole. Questioning the wisdom of the police will invariably put anyone in danger of becoming an asshole. Importantly, Maanen notes, it is in dealing with the asshole that the police exercise what he calls street justice or punishment.

Like the notion of the epic battle, also the asshole – or the *gago* – seems to be a global figure, named as such from the streets of the US and South Africa over Denmark to the Philippines.²⁶ And equally global is the person who often ends up in the category of the asshole, poor, young men that challenges the police' authority or taunt them by their continued disregard for the police administered discipline – in other words, people like José and Aris. In this way, the ordinary and the spectacular forms of policing violence animate and inform one another.

However, excessive police violence also inspires fear in the general population even if the violence is not always as ordered as the two officers suggested. In its effect, salvaging goes beyond killing the demon. Firstly, it is meant as is a warning or a deterrent. When bodies are intentionally dumped in crowded places with cards around the victim's neck, it sends a message to other criminals that eventually, "You will also end up like the dead guy lying beside the street". The officer cited above closes his argument stating "In

²⁶ See Jensen (2008) for an account of the asshole in South Africa and Holmberg (1999) for a similar account of Denmark.

order to save lives, you must kill". Secondly, the violence, whether it results from the battle between angels and demons or between crocodiles and assholes, also instils fear into the hearts of people in ways that work as social control. It becomes an illustration of what happens to those that challenge either crocodile or angel. In other words, peace, order and continued revenue are maintained through some measure of fear and terror. Almost every person had a story to tell about incidents of salvaging or torture. These stories might have come from memories of Marcos' time where salvaging was a stable policing and military strategy. Furthermore, according to activist informants interviewed in 2010, Bagong Silang constituted for many years (until the mid-1990s) the frontier between Maoist insurgents and the army. During and after the weakening of the Maoist insurgency, drug-fighting drives, violent crime clean-ups and a constant military presence in and around Bagong Silang have also produced disappearances and killings. These memories, and the fear of extreme violence, impact on people's behaviour and their perceptions of law enforcement units.

Policing and Violence Revisited

In this chapter we set out to explore how and by whom Bagong Silang was policed and how policing related to violence. We showed that the world of policing is highly complex; it is far from only the police that police Bagong Silang. The Barangay Justice System is present, more numerous and often constituting the first line of policing. Both police and Barangay peace officers maintain order but policing is never independent of political conflicts between dominant families and interests. Rather than concluding that this makes the state weak, we suggest that families, political interest and the state reinforce one another and that policing is a central part of this configuration of power.

At a first glance, state perpetrated violence did not seem to be an important concern. State perpetrated violence was minimal and people rated the performance of the policing structures as 'normal'. However, when explored further it emerged that 'normal' meant *ok lang*, that is, it is manageable and to be expected. We showed how people negotiated police corruption and extortionist practices through cunning, wit (*diskarte*) and money. The 'normal' co-existed with the not-normal, the excessive forms of state violence that draws its imaginary strength from the violent practices of the Marcos regime and the subsequent counter-insurgency and anti-crime drives of which Bagong Silang's residents have seen their share. This is most notably in the concept of 'salvaging', or extra-judicial killing. In the last section we discussed these forms of excessive violence. It is especially the dead bodies of young people that bear the mark of excessive violence. Practices of excessive violence also exist through police narratives of the potent, secretive state that works in efficient, strong and necessarily gruesome ways. This image of the potent state prevails parallel but in contrast to the police's everyday sense of impotence, lack of resources and bad conditions. And they exist through the terror they instil in the hearts of people to remind them that the state just might target you either as the crocodile (the corrupt police) or as the angel (fighting epic battles against demons).

Chapter 6: Recommendations

The recommendations here emerge out of the research done in Bagong Silang. They do not necessarily pertain directly to the work of Balay in Bagong Silang; they are general recommendations to any organization that may want to undertake a community-based intervention. The recommendations are divided into initiatives targeted at different groups. Methodologically, the survey can be used as a base line for evaluating interventions after a specified period, maybe guided towards specific points of interest. One should, however, be aware that these surveys are quite extensive and demand resources beyond what many organizations can muster.

1. General population: The report shows an important disjuncture between perceptions of the identity of perpetrators and the reality of violence as it is identified in the victimization survey. Firstly, violence does not seem to as rife in Bagong Silang as many think it is. Secondly, young people are more likely to be victimized by adults and not the other way around. Thirdly, violence is local rather than emanating from the outside:
 - a. Raise awareness of actual levels of violence to align it with realities of risk factors and most likely perpetrators and victims.
 - b. Raise awareness among in- and out of school youth of the dangers they face and help them develop strategies to avoid, evade and manoeuvre the violence that is visited upon them as likely victims of adult and state violence
 - c. Target structures of authority, like the *purok* to advocate for the protection of the young in local communities to change perception of perpetration and victimization.
 - d. Target the broader Bagong Silang community stressing the reality of victimization, including addressing the perception of the child and the issue of disciplining.
2. Communities: Violence plays an integral part in the production of gendered and generational communities.
 - a. Interventions based on a community approach need to be designed with the understanding that communities are not harmonious entities but are characterized by violence, often directed at women and young men.
 - b. Interventions need also to be designed with the understanding that conflicts pervade communities and that despite ideologies of *pakikisama*, families do seldom interact with the rest of the community and find it hard to engage in collective action. As community members are not necessary inclined to partake in collective action, particular individuals, depending on local power struggles, will always emerge to represent the 'community'.
 - c. Interventions need to be based on an understanding that neutrality is difficult to maintain.
3. Criminalized youth/ youth at risk: Criminalized youth – either through own actions or through stereotyping – are the group most at risk of experiencing excessive forms of state violence. While this approach might look like 'blaming the victim', keeping them out of sight of the police and the state can be effective way of preventing torture.

- a. Addressing the factors that increase their vulnerability, that is, poverty, criminal activities, alcohol and drug consumption and being out of school. Hence, socio-economic interventions and support can to a certain extent be TOV (torture and organised violence) prevention.
 - b. Working with youth to help them engage less confrontational with the police as part of *diskarte*. Young people have less manoeuvrability than other people and hence need to take more care.
- 4. State agencies: In informal exchanges and echoed in other contexts around the world (e.g. Jensen, 2008), state agencies identify human rights as obstacles to their work. Interventions need to take these objections seriously and rather than telling them not to violate human rights, the structures that increase the likelihood of violence need be addressed.
 - a. Put equal emphasis on the rights of law enforcers and the people they police.
 - b. Create alliances with the police through advocating for better conditions of law enforcers to address their sense of impotence.
 - c. As there seems to exist a link between violence and corruption, advocacy initiatives need to address the issue of corruption, including deciding at what level this must take place.
 - d. Advocate for formalization of TOV prohibition and creating institutional structures with allocated budgets at local government level.

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