

**MUSLIM AUTONOMY IN THE PHILIPPINES:  
RHETORIC AND REALITY**

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**To the memory of my late father,  
Mangontra "Abdulraffi" A. Tanggol,  
educator and loving father;**

**and**

**To the Filipino Muslims,  
who, I pray, will finally achieve their twin  
goals of self-determination and social justice**

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# FOREWORD

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The so-called Mindanao or Muslim problem has been with us for a long time and after decades of attempts on the part of the Philippine Government to resolve it, we still stare the problem in the face. Policies have been formulated and implemented in the past but, at most, they only succeeded in temporarily containing the violent aspects of the problem.

The Filipino Muslims have been aiming for self-determination, a goal that has mediated between secession and autonomy. For its part, the National Government could only promise regional autonomy.

Under the former strongman Marcos, negotiations were held between the National Government and the MNLF, with the participation of the Organization of Islamic Conference. It led to what is known as the Tripoli Agreement and its implementation by the Philippine Government, without the participation of the MNLF, created two Regional Autonomous Governments (RAG) in Mindanao covering a total of ten provinces instead of the thirteen provinces called for by the Agreement. When Corazon Aquino became President, re-negotiations were conducted with the MNLF and, after the usual "democratic processes," a new autonomous government was installed covering four provinces.

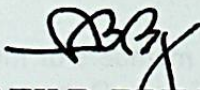
The publication of this book, **Muslim Autonomy in the Philippines: Rhetoric and Reality**, is very timely considering the on-going peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Among other things, the alternative policy formula suggested by the book may be considered as one reference point in the discussion of issues vis a vis the grant of regional autonomy.

In the study and practice of public administration, this book also makes certain contributions. It is one of those rare materials on public policy making and implementation in the Philippines. As a study of policy process, content, outcomes and performance, it provides some ground from which the dynamics and motivations of Philippine public policy

making and implementation can be viewed, particularly in relation to the peculiar demands of minority groups. While it provides us with the why, what and how of past governmental mechanisms for the delivery of goods and services to some part of the country, it also gives us an alternative mechanism through which the Filipino Muslims may feel permanently at ease with Philippine public administration.

Originally written as a doctoral dissertation, the reader will benefit from the careful and painstaking research of Dr. Tanggol in his attempt to put the Muslim problem in perspective. Dr. Tanggol's insightful book will surely be a welcome contribution to the limited literature on local government and development administration. In pluralistic societies like the Philippines, there is always this clamor for the best politico-administrative arrangements that can successfully pursue such values as responsiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and social justice, not only for considerations of national interest but also in view of the unique developmental demands of certain parts of the country. For it is not uncommon that certain interests of minority groups or local areas are sometimes unnecessarily sacrificed for such concept as national interest.

Dr. Tanggol has done a big favor for those interested in the praxis of public administration in general and in issues and problems of decentralization, local autonomy and ethnicity in particular. This book is therefore highly recommended.



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# MUSLIM AUTONOMY IN THE PHILIPPINES: RHETORIC AND REALITY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
Foreword	
Preface	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables	
<b>CHAPTER I Regional Autonomy in the Philippines:</b>	
<b>Historical and Theoretical Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Historical Background .....	1
B. Need for Regional Autonomy .....	10
C. Regional Autonomy in the Philippines .....	15
<b>CHAPTER II POLICY PROCESS: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
A. Marcos, Aquino and the Muslim Problem: An Introduction .....	18
1. The Pre-Aquino Situation: A Review of Marcos' Autonomy Process .....	18
2. The Edsa Aftermath: A Relook at the Mindanao Problem .....	21
B. Policy Process: Problem Structuring to Passage of RA 6734 .....	23
1. Problem Structuring .....	23
Peace Efforts .....	24
Democratic Processes: .....	32
1987 Constitution .....	32
Peace Commission .....	33
Mindanao Consensus-Building Panel .....	34
Regional Consultative Commission for Mindanao (RCC) ....	35
Service and Action Program .....	38
Problem Definition .....	39
Why problem was considered .....	39
How problem was defined .....	41
2. Forecasting the Future: the Making of Policy Alternatives .....	52
Policy Goals .....	52
What are these Goals? .....	52
How were they Developed and Chosen? .....	55
Why were they Chosen? .....	57
Scenarios .....	60
Alternatives .....	63
Tripoli Agreement .....	63

MNLF Proposal .....	64
Government Proposal .....	67
RCC Draft .....	70
Presidential Decree No. 1618 .....	73
The Choice .....	76
Criteria .....	76
The Constitutional Basis .....	80
RA 6734: Passage and Signing .....	81
C. Implementation of RA 6734: Policy Actions 1989-1991 .....	84
1. Policy Inputs .....	84
Time .....	84
Money .....	84
2. Policy Processes .....	94
Plebiscite .....	94
Elections .....	94
Organization of ARMM .....	109
Devolution .....	116

### **CHAPTER III. POLICY CONTENT: RA 6734 AND OTHER FORMULAS ... 123**

A. RA 6734, PD 1618, RCC Draft, MNLF Proposal, RA 6766, and the Tripoli Agreement: Content Analysis .....	123
1. Political .....	125
2. Fiscal .....	136
3. Administrative .....	143
4. Summary and Analysis .....	148
B. RA 6734 and the Local Government Code .....	153
1. RA 6734 and Local Autonomy .....	153
2. The New Local Government Code, RA 6734 and Local Autonomy .....	155
3. Implications to Local Autonomy .....	158
C. Flaws of RA 6734 .....	159

### **CHAPTER IV. POLICY OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE:**

#### **RA 6734 AND THE FUTURE ..... 165**

A. Policy Outcomes .....	165
1. Policy Outputs .....	165
Offices organized .....	165
Agencies devolved .....	169
Programs, projects implemented .....	171
Laws passed .....	173
Resolutions adopted .....	176
2. Policy Impacts .....	179
Areas, People affected .....	179
Effect on employees transferred to Regional Government ..	181
Effect on delivery of service, program planning and implementation .....	185

B. Policy Performance .....	190
1. Have offices been organized according to targets? .....	190
2. Have agencies been devolved according to schedule? .....	194
3. Have laws and resolutions been adequate in relation to program goals and people's needs and preferences? .....	197
4. Does the area of autonomy conform to policy goal and Moro aspiration? .....	201
5. Has the policy improved the status of the employees placed under the control of the Regional Government? .....	203
6. Has the policy improved the delivery of services, program planning and implementation? .....	204
C. Estimating the Future of Mindanao: .....	206

## CHAPTER V. TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE, RESPONSIVE AND IMPLEMENTABLE FORMULA: A POLICY CHOICE..... 217

A. Introduction .....	217
B. Alternatives .....	218
C. Option Three .....	218
D. The Matrix .....	226
E. Our Choice .....	227

## CHAPTER VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 236

A. Summary and Conclusions .....	236
B. Recommendations .....	257

## APPENDIX A: Chronology of the Policy Process: 1986 to 1991 ..... 264

## APPENDIX B: On the Issue of Area of Autonomy ..... 279

## APPENDIX C: Maps Showing the Areas of Autonomy Per Option ..... 287

## BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 297

## LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Title	Page
1	Summary of Releases, ARMM, From CY 1990 to CY 1991.	86
2	Actual Reports on Employment, As of December 31, 1991.	92
3	ARMM Personnel Component, 1990 to 1991.	93
4	Results of Plebiscite in Four Provinces Where "Yes" Shows a Majority.	96
5	Official Results of Plebiscite in Provinces and Cities with "No" Majorities.	97
6	Percentage of Voter Turn-out Per Province and City.	99
7	Comparison of Major Provisions in RA 6734, PD 1618, RCC Draft, MNLF Proposal, RA 6766 and the Tripoli Agreement.	123
8	Agency/Function Devolved, EO Number and Date Signed.	170

# MUSLIM AUTONOMY IN THE PHILIPPINES: RHETORIC AND REALITY

This is a comprehensive policy study with retrospective and prospective components. It is a study of process, content, outcomes and performance. As a study of process, it looks at the policy steps taken by the Aquino Government from problem identification to policy implementation, focusing on the period 1986 to 1991. As a study of content, it analyses the substance of autonomy in Republic Act No. 6734, comparing it with other formulas of regional autonomy, including Republic Act No. 6766, the aborted autonomy law for the Cordillera people. As an inquiry on outcomes, it investigates the policy outputs and impacts of RA 6734 and the process involved along certain outcome areas. Then it evaluates these outcomes in relation to specific targets and standards. Finally, this study attempts a predictive analysis of what could happen five years hence and recommends, after an actual exercise in policy choice, a certain policy formula for regional autonomy for Muslim Mindanao.



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