



Graduate School of Development Studies

**Brothers and Lovers in Arms:**

Negotiating Male Homosexuality with Military  
Masculinity in the New People's Army, Philippines

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## Dedication

*To mama, papa, mynmyn, denden and baby Sophia,*

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*To the people who have been a part of this research,*

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## List of Acronyms

CPP	-Communist Party of the Philippines
HMB	-Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan
HUKBALAHAP	-Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Mga Hapon
NGO	-Non-Government Organization
NPA	-New People's Army
OPRS	-On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes
ORS	-On the Relation of Sexes
UMAP	-Unidades Militaries Para el Aumento de la Produccion
WWII	-World War II

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## Abstract

Mainstream scholarship on gender and violent conflict has mostly marginalized issues of men, masculinities and sexualities, particularly heteronormativity. Studies on military organizations have shown little interest in gender, despite the fact that it is very much a gendered institution. This paper aims to contribute to the theorizing of relationships between military masculinity, and heteronormativity, in the context of a revolutionary movement with a Marxist/communist ideology, and thus open a new agenda for research.

Specifically, this exploratory research examines the Communist Party of the Philippines' (CPP) recognition of same-sex relationships and marriage, especially in its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA). In looking at how male homosexuality, in particular, is negotiated with military masculinity in the army, the issue is analyzed at different levels: ideology, institutions, subjective identities, and symbols.

The author argues for a rethinking of essentialist views of gender and sexuality. As separate but mutually constitutive domains of power, both are regarded as products of specific histories, and thus highly fluid and variable. Applied to military institutions, the concept of a hegemonic 'military masculinity' tied to compulsory heterosexuality is challenged, and a space for the recognition of plural military masculinities is opened, as demonstrated by the NPA experience. Finally, the author advances the use of *situated intersectionality* as an analytical concept to address gender and heteronormativity in their particular socio-spatial context, such as the New People's Army.

## Relevance to Development Studies

For so long, development was seen to be a gender-neutral process. While there is now growing scholarship on gender and development, there is still a lack of methodical and analytical consideration of the relationships between gender and heteronormativity that constitute the lived realities of people. This paper highlights the need to rethink gender in development as a field that not only narrowly addresses "women's issues", but should also encompass the study of men, masculinities and sexualities as part of gender(ed) relations.

## Keywords

gender, development, homosexuality, military masculinities, heteronormativity, situated intersectionality, Marxism, Communist Party, New People's Army, Philippines



## Preface

In February 2005, the front page of *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, carried the article entitled ‘Reds officiate first gay marriage in NPA’ (Pinsoy 2005: 94). It featured a photo of two men kissing with a sequined flag of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in the background, and above it another photo of women guerrillas forming an archway for the couple. Under the absolute leadership of the CPP, the New People’s Army (NPA) has engaged the Philippine Government in armed struggle since 1969 under the ideological guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Upon revisiting this article when I was sorting through ideas for a research topic, I was fascinated by the tensions I saw in the event—of a Marxist revolutionary army holding a wedding for two men situated in a largely Catholic country that views homosexuality (and homosexual acts) as immoral.

However, I was filled with so much apprehension that I thought of other topics to work on because I did not feel much confidence in tackling what was, for me, an unfamiliar territory. I had previously worked for a national women’s organization and political party in the Philippines, hence issues regarding male homosexuality, masculinity, and violent conflict were not really my “field”. But the more I thought about it, the more it intrigued me. Eventually, I rose up to the challenge of looking into something I knew little about, and embarked on what would be a very exciting journey.

The first question I always faced about my choice of research topic was simply, “Why?” And truly, I pained over coming up with a sufficient answer to justify why indeed I chose this. Many questioned its relevance to development, to whatever social contributions the research could offer. But I realize that it is the concept of development itself that has been left unquestioned. And in my initial hesitation, I also become conscious of how I have held a certain concept of what gender and development studies should encompass, leaving out, as many studies do, the question of men, masculinities, and sexualities.

So my answer to the simple question of why I chose to undertake this project is just as simple. “Why not?”

# CHAPTER 1: Embarking on a Queer Journey

The Philippines, unlike its other Southeast Asian neighbours, is predominantly Roman Catholic, a legacy of over 300 years Spanish colonization, encompassing ‘more than 80% of the population’<sup>1</sup> (Austria 2004: 96). The Catholic Church has figured prominently not only in the individual lives of many Filipinos but also in Philippine laws and politics.<sup>2</sup> Based on the premise of the Philippine Supreme Court that ‘Filipinos are by nature religious’, sexual morality, among others, is inscribed in state laws through Catholic standards (Austria 2004: 100). While the Philippines is generally perceived as ‘tolerant’ of homosexuality because of the presence of mainly cross-dressing gay men in beauty parlours and in the entertainment industry, much moral stigma is attached to homosexuality (Garcia 2004: 13).

In 2005, when news of the same-sex marriage in the New People’s Army (NPA) hit the press, it posed a challenge to mainstream society’s norms.<sup>3</sup> It challenged the Catholic Church’s stand on homosexuality, highlighted the Philippine government’s absence of such provision for homosexual citizens, and most especially contested the notion of military masculinity upheld by society, specifically in the institution of the Philippine Military (see McCoy 1999) which has been listed as among the institutions in the world that ban the entry of homosexuals (Ottoson 2006: 8).

This exploratory research is situated in the tensions that arise from this phenomenon, in the context of ongoing armed conflict. The study is interested in examining the Communist Party of the Philippines’ (CPP) recognition and institutionalization of same-sex relationships and marriage specifically in its armed wing, the NPA. While there are both male and female homosexuals in the NPA, I chose to limit the scope of my study to male homosexuals, mainly because I had difficulty making contact/finding female homosexuals within the limited period of my field work.

To guide my research, I had a main research question, with a set of sub-questions:

## **How is male homosexuality negotiated within the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army?**

1. How has the CPP-NPA come to openly recognize and formally accept homosexuality within the revolutionary movement as stipulated in party policy?
2. How are gender and (homo)sexuality and their relationships conceptualized/understood by the Party, and by the individual gay men?

3. What was the experience of individual gay men in the NPA before and after the official acceptance of homosexuality and recognition of same-sex relationships/unions?

## **Research Objectives**

This research aims to look at the process and conditions of how the Party has come to acknowledge homosexuality as reified in their policy documents, how this translates into practice inside the NPA, and how it affects lives and relationships of the members of the NPA. Thus, I hope to contribute to theorization of relationships between military masculinity, and heteronormativity, in the context of a revolutionary movement with a Marxist/communist ideology. These concepts will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

This is part of a wider social objective, that will show how masculinities and dominant notions about sexuality can be negotiated even in the most unexpected places such as in the NPA, and that gender/sexuality regimes can change through time, despite the resistance they might face. It is in situating this phenomenon in wider social movements that I hope to engage in discussions about gender and sexuality in contribution to the efforts to realize rights of marginalized groups and bring attention to these issues in the field of development studies and intervention. At present, there is a 'lack of critical systematic reflection about dominant conceptions of gender and sexuality—in particular heteronormativity' resulting in the 'silences and resistances observed in the development field in relation to "sex" and sexuality as if these had nothing to do with development at all (Cornwall et al. 2008: 2). I hope that valuable lessons can be derived from studying the NPA experience and could shed new light on how development practice has treated concerns of gender and sexuality.

Finally, this paper aims to set a new agenda for research in the field of masculinities, sexualities and armed conflict. I hope that such research can stir interest in undertaking similar or related studies contributing to the growing literature on men, masculinities and sexualities in conflict situations.

## **Current Research on Gender/Sexuality and Conflict**

Most of the theorizing done on gender and sexuality in situations of war and violent conflict has been limited to discussing 'gender equality', and integration of women into the army as part of an 'emancipation' project. Sexuality is often subsumed under gender, with emphasis on sexual exploitation of women or sexual violence against them with a lot of scholarship focusing on war rape (Zarkov 2006). Similarly, gender and

sexuality in mainstream development thinking, including a large section of feminist development studies, has mostly been associated with ‘women’s empowerment’. These fields of studies in my view, while undoubtedly of great importance, have largely left the study of men, masculinities and heteronormativity to the margins.

This research is relevant theoretically as it highlights these marginalized issues, stressing the importance of examining notions of masculinities and its relationship with heteronormativity in the study of revolutionary movements. While gender and conflict has been explored in scholarship, men, masculinities and sexuality in this field cover less ground especially in countries of the ‘Global South’ like the Philippines.

## **Methods of Data Collection and Methodology**

To attain the objectives set for this paper, I chose a qualitative approach and conducted 14 open interviews during fieldwork from July-August 2008. I interviewed 12 male homosexuals who formerly served in the New People’s Army<sup>4</sup>, as well as 2 key informants who were part of formulating party policy on sexual relations. This includes the founding Chair of the re-established Communist Party of the Philippines, Prof. Jose Ma. Sison who currently resides in Utrecht. I chose this as my primary research method because human sexuality is indeed something very intricate as an object of study, and therefore cannot fully be comprehended through purely quantitative analysis (Whitam and Mathy 1986:xxx). I needed to know about particular experiences from a small group of people tackling a very sensitive issue, and indeed it had been a real challenge for me to find interviewees who were willing to share their views and experiences given the context of the research. I felt that personal interviews were more apt for the project. I kept with me a journal wherein I wrote down observations and reflections throughout my fieldwork.

One limitation was not being able to meet most of my respondents on other days apart from the scheduled interview. Meeting them more informally and more frequently would have allowed greater rapport for them to share more. That they were also a dispersed group made it more difficult to “hang out” with them. Nevertheless, most became comfortable sharing their views and gave very valuable insights into their experiences. After each interview, we would talk informally and they would disclose things that they had not mentioned during the interview.

I sought the help of a friend who is active in the gay rights movement in my province of Cebu who had some contacts with the people I was looking for. By making use of the *snowball technique*, I was able to interview 12 gay men who had been involved in the NPA hailing from the provinces of Cebu (5) and

Bohol (2), and the city of Davao (5). Their experiences, however, span 5 regions in the Philippines where they had been assigned: Central, Eastern, and Western Visayas; Southern and Far South Mindanao. I also interviewed an informant in Manila who had been part of the discussions regarding policy amendments catering to homosexual relationships and the debates that surrounded the issue.

The gay men I interviewed came from a varied range of socio-economic backgrounds. Most had started out as student activists in local universities and later on got recruited to the underground movement and eventually joined the NPA. A few are of peasant and urban poor origins, while one is from an indigenous group in Mindanao. Most were in their early to mid-20's at the time of interview. During recruitment, many were fresh out of college or engaged in activism in their own communities with particular local struggles such as militarization in the countryside and demolition of houses in urban poor areas. Their experiences inside the army varied from a few weeks to a couple of decades. Each interview was usually between an hour to an hour and a half. With their permission, I recorded then transcribed most of the interviews.

I also employed documentary research specifically looking into the CPP documents on establishing sexual relationships, *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes* (OPRS)<sup>5</sup> with particular interest in *Section E* (better known as *Amendment E*). An accompanying document to this policy is *Some Explanations on the Guidelines for Marriage inside the Party (Ilang Paliwagan sa mga Tuntunin sa Pag-aasawa sa Loob ng Partido)* explaining the principles on which the policy is based. I also got hold of *The Party's Stand on the Homosexual Question (Ang Linya ng Partido sa Usaping Homosekswal)*.

In line with feminist standpoint traditions, I believe that my knowledge as a researcher is shaped by my social position and that looking from the viewpoint of the marginalized gives me a 'strong objectivity' that allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the situation, rather than taking a standpoint from a position of privilege (Harding 2005). Although there are many variants/streams of standpoint theory, I see knowledge as collectively produced and linked with historical/political positions rather than only being rooted to individual identity politics (Hearn and Kimmel 2006:60). Here, I examine not only the negotiations with military masculinities but also heterosexuality to which it is intimately linked, from the 'standpoint of heteronormativity'—rejecting the taken-for-granted naturalization of heterosexuality and seeing it instead as an exercise of power, acquiring a normative status that has led to the marginalization of other sexualities (Ingraham 2006:311).

This journey was an eye-opener for me, an opportunity to challenge my own assumptions, acknowledging that I sometimes fall into the trap of 'thinking straight' or viewing the world through a 'heterosexual imaginary'

(Ingraham 2006). This was a challenge that I had to overcome in studying homosexual Filipino men who have taken the challenge to social norms a step further— not just in terms of gender/sexuality, but also of ‘breaking away’ from society by joining an armed revolutionary movement. I had to allow openness to what fieldwork would lead me, as research should always entail reflexivity on the researcher’s part.

## ‘Dyslexia’ of Labels: situating social scripts

At this point, I feel the need to clarify certain constructions of homosexuality in the Philippines. After consulting mostly Western sources on sexualities, I found a lot of disjunctions with what was in the field. First was the simple dilemma whether to call an informant ‘he’ or ‘she’. In the *Tagalog*-based Filipino language, referring to both males and females as ‘*siya*’ illustrates that ‘pronouns and indexicals are not gender marked, however, adjectives are usually categorized to male, female and non-gendered’ (Manalansan 1995: 201).<sup>6</sup> Eventually, I realized that Western categories of sexualities did not necessarily fit the understanding of homosexuality in the Philippines. For a time, I felt afflicted by a form of ‘dyslexia’ in my trouble of reading such social scripts surrounding homosexuality. This made me aware of how much specific, social-spacial locations and histories matter in understanding lived realities.

It became imperative to look into local challenges to the Western constructs of ‘being gay’ (see Garcia 2004, Manalansan 1995, Tan 1998). Although there are women homosexuals in the Philippines, ‘homosexual’ conjures the image of an effeminate male. In *Tagalog*, the popular term used is *bakla*<sup>7</sup>. According to Martin Manalansan,

Indeed, while *bakla* conflates the categories of effeminacy, transvestism, and homosexuality and can mean one or all of these in different contexts, the main focus of the term is that of effeminate mannerism, feminine physical characteristics...and gender crossing.(1995: 196)

In the Filipino context, *kabaklaan* or the state of being a *bakla*, is a specific type of homosexuality popularly made synonymous to ‘homosexuality’. This construction of the *bakla* ‘primarily centers on two closely related images—the cross dressing queen and the pseudo-woman’ (Manalansan 1995: 197). While not all those called *bakla* are effeminate or ‘cross dressers’, they are generally considered to have the feelings of a woman. These images come out starkly in my interviews, exposing a popular view that ‘the *bakla* is a “real” screaming queen beneath the masculine façade’ (Manalansan 1995: 198-199).

The concept of *kalooban* greatly informs (gender) identity of the *bakla* in the Philippines. This refers the notion of ‘core-ness’ or what one really is on the inside (Garcia 2003:60). The expression, “a woman trapped in a man’s body” describes how male homosexuality in the Philippines is commonly perceived. While not all gay men may view themselves this way, this is a dominant discourse surrounding homosexuality.

Another interesting point uncovered in my fieldwork is that homosexuality is not necessarily defined by sexual acts themselves. Hence, a *bakla* might have sex with a ‘straight’ man, but only the *bakla* is considered homosexual (Garcia 2004: 13). It is not necessarily a matter of who is ‘active’ or ‘passive’, as homosexuality has already been defined through gender (the *bakla* being the feminine one)<sup>8</sup>. This caught my attention when some of the gay men I interviewed kept referring to one of the same-sex couple who got married as the ‘straight husband’ and the other one as the ‘gay wife’. Most *baklas* look for a ‘real man’ (i.e. ‘straight’), as many of them refer to sexual relations with other *baklas* in ‘cannibalistic terms’, e.g. eating’s one’s own flesh (Manalansan 1995: 200).

In the following chapters of this paper, I adopt Manalansan’s (1995: 195) usage of the term ‘gay’ as something ‘provisional’ as ‘[g]ay identity involves a cultural and politico-economic milieu’ particularly in Western history whose conditions for emergence do not automatically apply to the Philippines. I feel the only way to deal with my dyslexia of labels is to be conscious of their limitations and refer to how my informants address/perceive themselves.

## CHAPTER 2: *Gendering* Heteronormativity

This chapter lays out the analytical approach of this research. I review some prevalent assumptions about gender, how its relationship to sexuality has been theorized, and how I employ the intersections of these two power domains in my study. Specifically, I situate such intersections within a military setting, highlighting arguments for plural masculinities within the army, and reflecting on their interface with Marxist revolutionary movements.

### Towards a ‘Grounded Theory’ of Gender and Sexuality

The relationship between gender and sexuality has been theoretically problematic for feminist and queer studies over the years. While such studies are now clearly anything but monolithic, a lot of research has come to point out the interface between the two categories, particularly between gender and institutionalised heterosexuality/heteronormativity.

Gender has been theorized in a number of ways. One stream addresses gender as a ‘relational concept, built on the presumption of relations between biological males and biological females’ (Ingraham 2006:310). Another assumes the existence of only two sexes that are ‘fixed and stable categories’, and yet another builds on the ‘oppositeness’ of these categories (Ingraham 2006: 310). In using the term, I adhere to Joan Scott’s formulation of gender rejecting ‘fixed and permanent quality of binary opposition’ veering away from essentialist theses (1986:40). Not only is gender a product of history which is socially constructed, it is also an organizing principle in society that operates at multiple levels, and a useful category of analysis (Scott 1986: 40).

Heteronormativity, on the other hand, is defined as the way sexual orientation/behaviour is ‘organized, secured and ritualized—as the standard for legitimate and prescriptive socio-sexual behaviour...[as] fixed in time and space and universally occurring’ (Ingraham 2006:311). In adopting this formulation, I reject the ‘naturalization’ of heterosexuality, and like gender, treat it as a product of history and the exercise of power. Taking on Foucault’s theorizing, I see power as not only confined in ‘state, law or class.’ It is exercised rather than possessed; productive rather than merely repressive; dispersed and can also come from the bottom up; and most importantly, it always exists with the possibility of resistance (Sawicki 1991: 21-25).

The complexity of studying these areas comes from their seeming fluidity and variability with regard to history, context, and intersections with other social categories such as race and class, ‘constantly changing over their lifespan’ (Ingraham 2006:313). There is still a lot of contending ideas as to how much gender organizes sexuality or the other way around. Interestingly, Chrys



Ingraham (2006:309) argues how ‘gender is a central feature of heteronormativity, but it is institutionalized heterosexuality that is served by the constructions of gender.’ This exposition shows not only how gender and sexuality are interrelated, but more importantly, it also highlights *heterosexuality* as a specific form of sexuality that is brought into question. Ingraham (2006:312) argues further that while gender is often taken as a ‘starting point’ in analyzing sexuality, it is worth asking whether gender is possibly a ‘product of institutionalized heterosexuality’ since we have yet to ‘adequately determine if what we consider as gender or gendered behavior would even exist if not for its relationship to the institution of heterosexuality’.

Whether gender serves to organize heteronormativity or vice versa, grounding such theories in their specific social, political and historical contexts is always necessary. According to Diane Richardson, ‘the rise of queer theory in particular has led to a reappraisal of gender and sexuality categories’ wherein these are no longer seen as fixed and essentialized but rather ‘plural, provisional and situated’; and therefore intersections of gender and sexuality should be seen in terms of their local constructions and in what aspects they constitute each other (2007:458-459). I use the concept of *situated intersectionality* to analyze these two power domains, along with other categories (especially class and militancy), in the context of the CPP-NPA armed movement.

Thus, I analyze the relationship between gender and heteronormativity operating at different levels of social organization as Scott (1986) argues. Specifically, at the level of *ideology*, I go into an analysis of how the Communist Party conceptualizes gender and sexuality, and how recognition of homosexuality has been ‘reconciled’ with Marxist principles. At the level of *institutions*, I look at how the formal recognition of same-sex unions has re-defined acceptable masculinities within the NPA, and how gay men figure in the construction of marriage and family within the revolutionary movement. At the level of *subjective identities* where meaning about one’s identity is produced within the experience of their respective sexed bodies, I look at the construction of masculine identities relevant to the ‘sense of self’ for both gay and ‘straight’ men in the New People’s Army. Finally, on the level of gendered *symbols* and metaphors that give meaning to and make sense of our realities, I look at the body as a symbol and not just as a biological entity—a site of power, violence and contestation where military masculinity and sexualities are negotiated. It is important to keep in mind that the different levels that constitute the lives of gay men in the movement are situated within larger Philippine society, and to pay attention to the dynamics that exist in such situatedness.

## **Military Masculinities**

In any society, the concept of ‘masculinity’ is always a product of history (Connell 2005:71). Moving beyond previous conceptions of masculinity in the singular form which primarily deals with power relations of men over women,

current research on the field has shown the plurality of masculinities that exist in certain patterns of gender relations in a specific society (Connell 2005,Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

R.W. Connell's (2005) concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', wherein one type of masculinity becomes a referent against which other forms are measured at a given time and place has become significant in organization studies, especially in studies of military institutions. Research employing the concept has contributed largely in documenting the consequences and costs of hegemony, uncovering its mechanisms and showing multiplicity of masculinities; and in replacing 'categorical models of patriarchy' (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:834). While showing how production of masculinities, as well as sexualities, are different cross-culturally, such studies have also shown the ways that they are similar wherein there is 'the need to negotiate certain roles and positions, the struggle to maintain continuity or introduce change, the frailty of established boundaries and differences' (Zarkov 2007:152). In other words, the hegemonic position attained by a certain type of masculinity is never fixed and is always being contested, negotiated and reconfigured. In this case the army becomes the site for such contestations.

Mainstream research on the military shows little interest in gender although it is a very gendered institution, 'largely governed by men' producing and recreating 'norms and practices associated with masculinity and heterosexuality' (Kronsell 2005:281). According to Jeff Hearn (2003:xiv), despite the common conception that militarism is tightly linked to what is considered 'masculine', there is not a wealth of literature focusing on men, masculinities and the military, and I would add, even less, if at all, on existing revolutionary armies like the NPA. The notion of 'military masculinity' seems to bind men's (as well as women's)<sup>9</sup> bodies to one uniform type of masculinity, and focuses more on 'male-female axis of opposition' (Kovitz 2003: 10). There is a weakness in such an approach as it does not allow for attention to the fractures within 'military masculinity' itself—hence the presence of military *masculinities*. These fractures are masked by a variety of methods employed by the institution such as the ranking system wherein higher ranking officers embody the more 'superior' kind of masculinity, and the construction of 'masculine unity' through fostering 'troop solidarity' (Kovitz 2003: 9).

According to Paul Higate, military masculinities differ from masculinities in a 'civilian environment' as the former are 'assumed to have their own essence, linked ultimately with violence' (2003:29). However, this is not just any kind of violence but one that has legitimacy, with the army having the 'authority to kill' (Higate 2003: 29). Building on this premise, 'institutionalized violence (e.g. by armies) requires more than one kind of masculinity. The gender practice of the general is different from the front-line soldier...training them separately' eventually producing a hierarchy of masculinities (Connell in Higate 2003:30).

Lastly, Geert De Neve (2004) advances a strong argument on studying masculinities in both its social and spatial contexts to avoid generalizing models of masculinity. While I look at how masculinities are constructed especially in terms sexuality, I locate it within the space of the revolutionary army. According to De Neve, '[t]o be a man...is to control a space, and while different men attempt this through different styles of behaviour, their style and its aesthetics will always depend on the resources available to them' (2004: 94). I find this relevant as negotiations of gay men with military masculinity in the NPA come in different ways, according to available resources.

In my study of male homosexuality in the NPA, I use the term 'military masculinity' as a form of hegemonic masculinity within the army that suppresses other forms of masculinities which are nevertheless present. I link this notion to 'compulsory heterosexuality' (Adrienne Rich in Ingraham 2006: 315) to create the focal point of negotiations of other masculinities in the army.

Furthermore, this research reflects on dominant notions and practices of (military) masculinities in Philippine society in relation to military masculinities of the CPP-NPA, and explores the interface between these and the gender/sexuality ideology that informs the Marxist revolutionary movement.

## **Marxist Movements and Homosexuality in History**

Marxist revolutionary movements across history have treated homosexuality with ambivalence at best, and outright persecution at worst. In Cuba, for example, there were accounts of so-called 'moral purges' in the 1960's against 'anti-socialist delinquents' who were taken to labour camps, *Military Units to Increase Production* or *Unidades Militaries Para el Aumento de la Produccion* (UMAP), to be rehabilitated (Hekma et al. 1995: 4-5). This included 'youths who showed "too much concern" with their personal appearance...they were said to be victims of la enfermedad (the disease)...homosexuals were high on the list' (Young in Ocasio 2002: 85). Fidel Castro had justified these arrests as necessary 'in building a new country, that he needed strong men free of psychological flaws...the homosexual was a bad example for young people' (Ocasio 2002: 82).

In Russia, while homosexual acts were decriminalized under Lenin, 'sanctions were invoked where such practices abounded.' Sexual emancipation was viewed as 'a symptom of bourgeois degeneracy' (Hekma et al. 1995: 22). Later on under Stalin, an anti-sodomy statute was implemented, with the Communist State becoming increasingly 'puritanical and homophobic' (Hekma et al. 1995: 23).

While Marxism in general looks at human beings as ‘a product of history’, it tends to view ‘gender and sexuality as biological givens and thus essentially ahistorical’ which mainly resulted from the dominant thinking during the Age of Enlightenment that gave primacy to biological and medical (therefore scientific) reasoning (Hekma et al. 1995: 7). Appeal to the biological was viewed as having ‘significant legitimating power’ (Ingraham 2006: 310), as gender/sexuality can be seen as having ‘material basis’ central to Marxist logic thus allowing for homosexuality to be seen as a natural phenomenon. On the other hand, this logic has also led to treating homosexuality as a pathological condition. Hence, attitudes toward possibly ‘inborn’ or biological homosexuality became ambivalent (Hekma et al. 1995: 22). ‘Cultural causes’ of homosexuality, however, had been treated with much contempt. When medical science dealt with homosexuality, it was argued that culture had a hand in ‘distorting’ natural instincts to procreate (Hekma et al. 1995: 22). The concept of homosexuality as a ‘social form of “bourgeois decadence” fundamentally foreign to “really existing socialism”’ also became another discourse that influenced some Marxist movements’ (Hekma et al. 1995: 24). Even until the present, biological/medical knowledge is still perceived by many as more valid than other kinds of knowledges, especially in the field of gender and sexuality.

Taking this relationship between Marxist movements and homosexuality in history, the recognition of homosexuality in the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army is something quite novel. Thus it is necessary to unpack Marxist revolutionary movements’ notions of gender/sexuality and military masculinities—an endeavour my research attempts to tackle by looking at the NPA experience.

## CHAPTER 3: 'Revolutionizing' Gender and Sexuality

In arguing for the examination of the *situated intersections* of gender, sexuality and militancy in the New People's Army, it is necessary to understand the social context in which it is positioned. In this chapter, I highlight some prevalent notions about masculinities and femininities in Philippine society, briefly look at the history of the Communist Party and the New People's Army and the context of its conflict with the Philippine state, and finally describe how the gender/sexuality ideology of the Party was constructed before the official recognition of same-sex relationships.

### The Strong and The Beautiful

*As the bird pecked continuously, however, the [bamboo] shoot began to split into two equal halves...a golden skinned man and an equally hued woman emerged. The man, named Malakas (strong), and the woman called Maganda (beautiful) thus became the first Filipinos.<sup>10</sup>*

The story of *Malakas* and *Maganda* is a popular legend that tells of the origins of Filipinos. Unlike the Biblical Eve who came from the rib of Adam, *Malakas* and *Maganda* both emerged from a bamboo that had been split open by the mythical bird *sarimanok*—the man exemplifying strength, the woman personifying beauty, as 'complementary' characteristics coming from one source. In this gendered and (hetero)sexualized mythology, both characters are personified through physical traits. In Philippine society, 'a popular belief is that the sexes differ in their biological makeup and such differences account for the different roles and positions in society' (Israel-Sobritchea 1990: 30).

On the physical level, a dominant notion of being 'masculine' in the Philippines requires strength like *Malakas*, along with associated traits such as bravery, alertness, decisiveness, ability and responsibility to provide for one's family (Israel-Sobritchea 1990: 31). On the other hand, femininity is associated with beauty and physical weakness, as women are 'perceived to be weaker, shorter, and smaller than men' and thus expected to do 'light' and less 'risky' work (i.e. feminine work) such as domestic chores and childcare (Israel-Sobritchea 1990: 30). Related to this perceived weakness is the dominance of 'emotion' over 'reason'. These constructions are very much tied to the institutions of marriage and family. Moreover, having several children is a 'dominant cultural value' wherein 'childlessness is considered a lonely and undesirable state' (Israel-Sobritchea 1990: 31).

In the representations of femininities in the Philippines, the concepts of *motherhood* and care-giving have dominated. However, not all motherhoods are equally valued, as *acceptable motherhood* is intimately linked to marriage and family, either nuclear or extended, especially sanctioned by the Catholic Church (Rodriguez 1990: 21). 'Unwed mothers and children out of wedlock are a social disgrace and suffer social ostracism. Premarital sex is even taboo especially for a single woman whose "greatest gift" to her husband is her virginity' (Rodriguez 1990: 21). Moreover, 'the maternal body is constructed through the iconography of the martyr...as mothers, women also protect the lives of others' to the extent of sacrificing themselves (Hilsdon 1995: 20). Men who do 'feminine' work and allow women to be the 'man' in the marriage/relationship are often ridiculed as being *ander da saya* (hiding under the wife's skirt), as practices attached to motherhood/care-giving are 'a woman's job'.

Another dominant construction is the idea of the weak 'female victim' (violated) and the strong 'male perpetrator' (violator). In fact, many women's NGO's and institutions build on this concept to highlight the cases of violence against women and work for their protection.<sup>11</sup> Not only is such victimization apparent in dealings with individual cases (e.g. battering, rape, etc.) but also in studies of institutional state violence along gendered lines like that of militarization in the Philippine countryside. These studies emphasize military cruelty (masculine) and civilian suffering (feminine), particularly those of women and children, even though not everyone in the army are men, and not all 'victims' are women (see Hilsdon 1995, Ocasiones 2006).

These notions come together in nationalist symbolism, with the nation usually referred to as *inang bayan* (motherland). The *mother* is assumed to give nourishment to her people; the female *body* of the nation is seen as needing to be defended by her sons (McCoy 1999: 44); and as a feminized *victim*, the concept depicts the nation as 'raped' or plundered by colonial/imperialist powers.

However, changes in these constructions have emerged due to shifting social, economic and political conditions. For example, globalization and the demand for domestic care work abroad resulted in the Philippines becoming 'the top labor exporter in the world' (McGovern 2007: 24) leading to women becoming breadwinners for their families back home, and for some men to take on the role of mother/care-giver. The strengthening of the women's movement in the Philippines has also led to the construction of the 'strong independent woman', fighting not only for women's rights but for causes like nationalism and democracy. New masculinities have also evolved because of this development, sometimes still using dominant notions of masculinity to change men, such as the concept of *ang tunay na lalaki ay hindi nambubugbog* (a real man does not beat up his wife/girlfriend) used by men working for women's rights.

In this account, I highlight *some* dominant notions of masculinities and femininities in the Philippines<sup>12</sup> and some changes that have occurred in its history, stressing that these concepts are not static but continuously negotiated. Within these notions, gender is very much linked to the differences between biological sexes and the roles appropriated them. With marriage and raising a family central to discussions of such gender relations, heteronormativity helps to frame such constructions, since in many of these conceptualizations homosexuals become invisible, but nevertheless gendered, actors in society.

These intersections within wider Philippine society (and even international developments) help us understand the CPP-NPA better and contextualize the historical development of the CPP-NPA and how its gender/sexuality ideology has been shaped to recognize same-sex unions.

## **Brief History of the CPP and NPA**

The history of the Communist Party of the Philippines is closely linked to the history of peasant rebellion and anti-colonial struggle. It was first established on November 7, 1930 by Crisanto Evangelista when the country was still under US colonial rule (Sison and Werning 1989:41). In World War II, the CPP leaders formed the People's Army against Japan (HUKBALAHAP) conducting guerrilla warfare against Japanese invaders. In succeeding years after the WWII, the CPP would swing from collaborating with the government and engaging in parliamentary struggle, to taking up arms against the state when their attempts to bring reforms through participation in Congress were frustrated, thus forming the People's Liberation Army (*Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan*—HMB) in 1950. However, the movement waned as their military offensives faced effective counterattacks from government forces and because, according to the present constituency of the Party, the movement was devoid of the proper 'organizational, political and ideological basis' needed to wage armed struggle. It was still also very much concentrated only in some areas of Luzon, a major island group in Northern Philippines (Sison and Werning 1989:43).

Under the leadership of Jose Ma. Sison, with Amado Guerrero as his code name, the Communist Party of the Philippines was re-established on December 26, 1968, following Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as its main ideological line, and in contrast to the Soviet-inspired (and sponsored) old Party. This new Party resulted from 'an internal schism in the parent [Party], created by ideological differences and by personal animosity between Sison and [the old Party] leaders' (Ocasiones 2006: 30). This period is known as the *First Great Rectification Movement* of the CPP.

The re-established Party sees the Philippines as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society with 'US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism' as the roots of society's ills (Guerrero 1970:13). The semi-colonial character is supposedly derived from the persisting violation of US imperialism on national sovereignty 'strangling Philippine independence' (Guerrero 1970: 13). Although the Philippines gained official independence from the USA in 1946, the CPP sees the US still largely dominating the country's economy, politics and culture. Hence, Philippine independence is seen as incomplete. US imperialism is also said to feed on the 'old feudal mode of production' that exploits the vast majority of Filipino peasants to keep them in poverty and to ensure cheap labor and raw materials (Guerrero 1970: 13). The CPP thus engages in a class struggle primarily against the *big comprador bourgeoisie*, big landlords and bureaucrat capitalists in government that collaborate with US imperialism.

The New People's Army was formally founded on March 29, 1969 absorbing some remaining members of the People's Liberation Army. The NPA followed the 'strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside over a protracted period of time' integrating armed struggle, land reform and mass base building (Liwanag 1988). In the next decade, the revolutionary movement spread from the small group concentrated in Luzon to other regions in the Philippines.

As the CPP and the NPA grew in numbers, there was also a flourishing of mass actions in 1970-1972 due to a range of social problems such as high school tuition, unemployment and low wages. When Martial Law was declared in 1972 by Ferdinand Marcos, urban-based organizations under the broad alliance *Movement for a Democratic Philippines* were outlawed and forced to go underground. They were eventually 'absorbed' by the revolutionary movement in urban areas and the countryside and fought against the dictatorship (Liwanag 1988).

From 1980-1983, the revolutionary movement rapidly expanded due to conditions of Martial Law and continuing economic crisis. Guerrilla fronts were then established in almost all regions in the archipelago. The assassination in 1983 of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, a Senator viewed by many as a symbol of resistance to Marcos, fuelled more social unrest and strengthened the revolutionary movement even more (General Review of Important Events and Decisions [1980-1991] 1992).

However, as fast as the revolutionary forces grew, they were also decimated by 'imbalances' in deployment of forces and tasks. The movement underestimated the strength of the state and over-estimated its own, leading to 'grave errors' such as the premature regularization of its army in the countryside and urban insurrectionism. This went against its principle of



protracted people's war, ultimately resulting in the collapse of most of its mass base (General Review of Important Events and Decisions [1980-1991] 1992).

In 1992, after the fall of the Marcos regime and the reinstatement of Philippine democracy, the Party underwent the *Second Great Rectification Movement* that addressed ideological, political and organizational problems. This eventually led to the splitting of the organization—the 'reaffirmists' and the 'rejectionists', the former now constituting the present Party.

Meanwhile, as a parallel development, the gay movement in the Philippines was emerging. On June 26, 1994 the first Gay March in Asia was led by PROGAY Philippines, an organization established by gay student activists in Manila in September 1993.<sup>13</sup> It led several protest actions challenging 'the Catholic hierarchy and [the government] for their respective inept positions on gender, population and development' and criticized the military for banning entry to gay men.<sup>14</sup> They also joined other activist organizations in wider political actions on different issues (e.g. joblessness, land reform, etc.).

At this point in the Party's history, with ideological consolidation and organizational regrouping, and the strengthening of the gay movement in Philippine society, discussions and debates on same-sex relationships occurred.

### **The CPP's Gender/Sexuality Ideology (Before Amendment E)**

Discussion on gender or sexuality in the CPP-led revolutionary movement cluster around the 'material' basis of such categories and the 'scientific-ness' of the Party's understanding of these issues, citing the primacy of class as *the* category of analysis—with all other forms of social relations (such as gender) assuming a secondary role. Any hierarchy among gender relations is viewed to emerge from the semi-colonial and semi-feudal system of the nation's political economy, more specifically from the 'bourgeois and feudal mode of thinking' (ORS 1974).

It is erroneous to conclude that the CPP's gender/sexuality ideology has remained the same since its inception, since it is not separate from the historical development of the organization. During the 1940's-1950's, the People's Army Against Japan (HUKBALAHAP) under the old Party enlisted women to join the armed struggle against the Japanese. The CPP was among the first 'major political and military organizations in their countries' that actively recruited women fighters (Lanzona 2008:3). Among the problems at this time for the old Party was how to address the 'sex problem' of married men who left their wives at home and took in 'forest wives', usually 'young single women in the camps.' The CPP then came up with a document, *Revolutionary Solution of the Sex Problem*, which allowed these men to have extramarital relations '[c]laiming biological necessity' (Lanzona 2008: 3-4). While such policies

still relegated to both men and women ‘traditional gender roles’ (which later became a liability to the HUKBALAHAP) it contributed to placing issues of family, sex and morality in the organization’s agenda, subjected to ‘administrative control’ (Lanzona 2008: 4).

In the early years of the re-established Party after 1968, the leadership started to codify regulations pertaining to courtship, establishment of relationships, marriage and divorce. Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, who had taken part in making the guidelines, said in an interview with me that prior to the codification of the policy in 1972-1974, there was already a harsh ‘customary law’ that covered such relationships. In contrast to the previous policy in the HUK movement, infidelity (*pagkakalima*) was ‘punished in the severest way’ sometimes even by death. Later on, he said, the Party learned to deal with such situations, and when the first draft of *On the Relation of Sexes* (ORS) came out in 1974 (in English), such acts of infidelity, especially addressing male comrades, were no longer subjected to such severe punishment. According to the 1974 ORS draft<sup>15</sup> ‘[t]he question of the relation of sexes is fundamentally a class question. It is a struggle between two world outlooks—the bourgeois and the proletarian’ (ORS 1974). Therefore, as an expression of proletarian love, the couple must always keep the interest of the revolution as their first priority over their personal relationship.

Such guidelines set out the basis for creating a ‘proletarian relationship’ and ultimately for marriage and the creation of a *revolutionary family*. They also ensured that the revolution is always the primary focus of any union. It necessitated interventions of various *yunit* (red collectives) into relationships from courtship to marriage to raising a family and, in some instances, divorce.<sup>16</sup> However, while these guidelines depart from the old Party’s notion of the ‘sex problem’, they still build on the concept of a man having voracious sexual appetites to be appeased or disciplined.

A main reference for discussing gender relations of the new Party was the classic work of Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and The State*. In looking at women and their relationship with men, the Party adopted Engel’s own explanation of the ‘civilized society founded on private property’ giving rise to a ‘patriarchal class system’ emphasizing ‘male supremacy and female inferiority’ (Engels 1972 [1891]:9).

Here gender is seen to revolve around man-woman relationships, especially man’s power over woman, and is addressed in Party rules by providing protection to woman from being sexually exploited by man and affording women equal rights. This, of course, is also a product of the efforts of women cadres, especially in the 1970’s, to transform the ‘masculinist’ ideology of the Party (Laya 1999).

Some important points emerge from my analysis of the Party’s gender ideology: (1) women’s involvement in the revolutionary movement is seen as significant, but the victory of the whole struggle is viewed as a requisite toward women’s own liberation from patriarchal oppression; (2) men are seen to be

prone to sexual indiscretions and are potentially exploitative of women due to their bourgeois/feudal influences as well as biological urges; (3) any sexual relationship *should* lead to marriage and the creation of a revolutionary (proletarian) family; and in relation to this point, (4) such understanding of gender and sexuality only applies to heterosexual relations and does not legitimize same-sex partnerships. More specifically, there was a systemic silence about homosexuality in the revolutionary movement and within the Party's gender ideology.

According to Sison, while there were Party members and cadres who were admittedly gay, particularly in the urban areas engaged in 'cultural work' (theater, film, arts, etc.), policy and political documents still did not reflect on homosexuality. However, he said gays were 'tolerated, respected and credited' for their contributions to the movement, and '*homosexuality was not being discussed even if we noticed that some men were mabinbin*<sup>17</sup> (timid), *an expression for gayness.*' When he was in the NPA, Sison said he had not heard of any open declaration of gayness. Red fighters were perceived to be 'strong and brave' and this was an anti-thesis of being gay.

Around 1997, shortly after the Second Great Rectification Movement was initiated, discussions on sexual relations revived, and male and female homosexuality was debated. Now, I ask: How much of this gender/sexuality ideology of the Party has changed due to these new debates?

## CHAPTER 4: Queering the Party

In this chapter, I go into the main debates surrounding the Party's recognition for homosexuals and analyze some key Party documents formulated to address this matter, namely: *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes, Some Explanations on the Guidelines for Marriage inside the Party* and *The Party's Stand on the Homosexual Question*. All titles of and quotations from the documents are my own translation to English. In examining the texts, I use categorization and frame analyses.

In studying categories created in the texts, I can see how certain labels are characterized, and to look at the 'conceptual meanings' assigned to such classifications (Yanow 2000: 54-55). I also use frame analysis in order to see the relationships among these categories.<sup>18</sup>

This chapter analyzes the institutions of the CPP, particularly its construction of marriage and family, as well as the Party's ideology in relation to gender/sexuality after *Amendment E*.

### Debating Homosexuality in the CPP

To answer my questions on how the Party came to recognize homosexuality, particularly same-sex relationships, I went to Manila and was referred to Carlos, a former cadre who participated in discussions leading to the amendment of the *On the Relation of Sexes*. He had attended special meetings and discussion groups as a member of the National Youth and Students Bureau (YS Bureau).<sup>19</sup> These meetings were attended by representatives of the CPP's main departments mostly situated in the National Capital Region.

When the Party split in 1992 during the Second Great Rectification Movement, it had to resolve issues on three levels: ideological, political and organizational. Nearing the end of the decade, the Party had declared victory in almost all three matters, except for the question on sexual/interpersonal relationships. This was seen as directly affecting the 'future of the movement' in terms of the social, and literally biological, reproduction of Party cadres as Carlos explains:

*Pre-1992, relationships were handled in a distorted way. There was a lot of liberalism<sup>20</sup> among Party cadres, separations, and other sexual indiscretions. No time was invested in deriving lessons in forming and sustaining relationships. Many comrades were having sexual relationships but the guidelines were no longer enforced to help them develop their relationship toward*

*the creation of a revolutionary family. The Party was called upon to enforce such guidelines. A strategic view in establishing sexual relationships was that they should lead to marriage and not be seen as a joke.*

So in 1997, in the initial context of having more ‘gender sensitivity’ in framing sexual relations in the Party, the National Women’s Bureau facilitated formal discussions surrounding the issue, providing kits with researched data and documents. They reviewed Engels’ *The Origin of the Family* to elevate the issue to a ‘conceptual level’ and provide theoretical roots to the notion of a *revolutionary family*. Eventually, Carlos said, the discussion led to the topic of homosexuals in the movement:

*A question then arose whether only relationships between men and women should be allowed in the Party. Are gays and lesbians not entitled to form revolutionary families? The basic debate was on the two main responsibilities of the family: participation in economic production and reproduction. So on this second point, how are gays and lesbians to be addressed? Will the Party limit itself to this logic on the issue of the right to establish relationships?*

He added that the issue on what causes homosexuality, whether or not there is a ‘scientific’ or material basis for it, has become ‘irrelevant’. *‘Who are we to determine?’* he asked, adding that apart from difficulty of uniting on a single scientific explanation, the *‘actual participation in the revolution is enough basis for recognizing [gays], and there is no need to intellectualize further.’* Anyway, he added, homosexuals were already participating in the revolution and, *‘it was the responsibility of the Party to resolve it.’*

Another important point emerging in the interview was the fear raised by some cadres (mostly men) of the proliferation of ‘gay and lesbian culture’ such as cross-dressing and gay lingo (particularly associated with the *bakla*). Some asked why, instead of countering ‘gay culture’ which is a product of bourgeois society and decadence, the CPP was recognizing homosexuality.

*My interpretation of this view is that there was a notion that ‘the proletarian’ has firm principles with matching physical strength. Gays are seen to be weepy, emotional and affectionate (malambing). This was viewed as dangerous to the concept of proletarian standpoint (Carlos).*

This perception was eventually countered with the argument that the Party aimed to strengthen ideology and not the physical body. The basis for being a proletarian is not invested in physical strength but in upholding Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Carlos said that this development showed the level of maturity of the CPP and that, it helped counter the ‘macho’ views of some

Party members. ‘However [this recognition of gays] was received by our comrades, their views do not reflect the Party’s general principles’ (Carlos).

Despite resistance within the Party, a memorandum was eventually issued by the leadership regarding the amendment to *On the Relation of Sexes*, now *Amendment E*, formally included in the revised *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes* in 1998.<sup>21</sup>

## **On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes**

*On the Relation of Sexes* (ORS) was amended in March 1998 during the 10<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the CPP Central Committee, now known as *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes* (OPRS).<sup>22</sup> This document provides guidelines for dealing with interpersonal/sexual relationships among Party members. It has five sections on courtship, marriage, divorce, disciplinary actions and recognition of homosexual relations and holds the following major amendments to the old ORS:

- a. Pre-marital sex should still be avoided but is no longer subjected to disciplinary action, and will be addressed with criticism, reminders and education.
- b. In granting divorce, the trial period was removed and replaced with careful examination of the basis for divorce presented by one or both parties.
- c. There was devolution of power to approve the establishment of relationships and give a couple permission to wed. This is no longer the sole responsibility of higher organs of the Party, but a power granted to the lower committee level, or seksyon.
- d. Different types of disciplinary actions are applicable to various transgressions of the guidelines which were not made clear in the previous document. Cases that can be tried in the revolutionary courts are also differentiated.
- e. *A separate section is added on the recognition and respect for homosexual relationships.*

I will primarily focus on the sections dealing with courtship, marriage and *Amendment E* as these are the main portions that provide insights in the CPP construction of the institutions of marriage and family, and how same-sex relations are situated in these constructions. Moreover, I also refer to *Some Explanations on the Guidelines for Marriage inside the Party*, a supplementary document of the OPRS that helps us understand the Party’s position on the issues raised.

The OPRS opens with a statement that in marriage, the Party and the people's revolutionary interest supersedes all other interests. Much of the old document was kept in this new version, including the adoption of the concept of *class love* (political) over *sex love* (personal), both constituting *proletarian love*. In *Some Explanations*, The CPP emphasizes the necessity for all Party and candidate members to study the OPRS since the guidelines will ensure that the interests of the revolution are upheld; Secondly, that the rights of individual members are protected; and thirdly, that a healthy proletarian relationship is nurtured by the couple. Studying the OPRS is also seen as the key to countering the bourgeois, feudal and largely Catholic views on love and marriage dominant in Philippine society that may still influence Party members.

The collective, called a *yunit*, plays a very big part in Party life—from the making of political and organizational decisions to discussing matters such as family problems and individual concerns. While members are not discouraged to display independence and initiative, they also go by the organizational principle of *democratic centralism*. This principle is based on the notion of the minority acceding to the majority, the lower organs acceding to the higher organs, accountability, and the right of every member to be heard.<sup>23</sup> Hence, in forming relationships and all the issues that occur before, during and after these are established, the collective is a visible presence. The document states that if a Party member intends to 'court' or pursue someone, his/her respective *yunit* must be informed first :

**Sec. A.2.** In order to court someone, the member or candidate member must have the permission of the *yunit* responsible for overseeing his/her work. If the person courted is from another *yunit* of the Party, the suitor's *yunit* will inform the other *yunit* of his/her intentions and will ask for permission to initiate the courtship process if the one courted agrees. (OPRS 1998)

The collective is also responsible for scrutinizing whether both *class love* and *sex love* are presented as basis for such relationship before permission is granted. The document also allows for a Party member to court or accept courtship from someone who is not a Party member who: can be processed to become a candidate member within six months, is not a traitor or anti-revolutionist or someone who would hold back the Party member from fulfilling one's tasks.

The guidelines strongly forbid any Party member to court or accept courtship from more than one person at a time and court or accept courtship from someone already in a relationship or married. Other provisions include the restriction of New People's Army members or others serving the revolution 'full time' from entering a relationship within the first year of service. It also sets a minimum of one year as an engagement period before a couple is allowed to get married.

An amended provision pertains to the restrictions on pre-marital sex, aiming to ‘ensure the protection of women from exploitation and to give the couple time to prepare for the responsibilities of forming a family while waging a revolution’ (OPRS 1998, Sec. A. 10).

Marriage also goes through the same collective intervention as ‘marriage is a serious thing that should be carefully prepared for by the couple and the responsible *yunit*/s of the Party’ (OPRS 1998, Sec. B. 1.). Apart from the *yunit*, sponsors and the chosen officiating CPP cadre have the responsibility to look after the marriage, offering advice to the couple when necessary, such as how to remain loyal to each other and to the revolution, and advice on the ‘revolutionary way’ of bringing up their children (OPRS 1998, Sec. B. 7.). All these rights and responsibilities are inscribed in the marriage contract found in the document.

The last section, *Amendment E*, is a very short addendum to the previous On the Relation of Sexes. I have translated its only two points below:

E. On Same-Sex Relations

1. The Party recognizes the right of each individual member to choose their sex (kasarian).<sup>24</sup>
2. The basic principles and guidelines for marriage inside the Party are applicable to their case.

My analysis shows that *On the Proletarian Relationships of the Sexes* very early on brings forward a binary form of categorization, that of the *Proletarian* and the *Bourgeois*, like its predecessor, *On the Relation of Sexes*. The proletarian viewpoint, which the document claims to represent, portrays the bourgeois mode of thinking about sexual relations, as its categorical other. In *Some Explanations*, proletarian love supposedly combines freedom and discipline, rights and responsibilities—constituted by emotions as well as principles. This is opposed to ‘anarchy’ in love present in the bourgeois viewpoint, which is basically the absolute freedom for the individual to do what one wishes. This apparently leads to the violation of others’ rights, irresponsibility in getting in and out of relationships and ‘loose morality’ (*Some Explanations on the Guidelines for Marriage inside the Party* 1998).

The document also categorizes individual Party members, whether single, married or in a relationship, subdivided as ‘men’ and ‘women’, and the *yunit* one might belong to, representing Party authority. While forming relationships is a personal process a Party member might undergo, it is also a collective experience. Whereas these are very explicitly stated in the guidelines, I find another categorization not as candidly expressed—heterosexuality vs. homosexuality. This leads me to reflect on assumptions of gender and sexuality underpinning the OPRS. While the document is framed within the Party’s conception of proletarian love, it is situated in a larger frame of waging a



revolution that rejects bourgeois society, including the culture that informs bourgeois love. However, if we follow the document's arguments for proletarian love we will find that underlying it all is a heteronormative ideology *despite* the inclusion of Section E.

When the OPRS emphasizes *class love* as the principal aspect of proletarian love, while *sex love* remains secondary albeit indispensable, it stresses the point that all 'relations of the sexes' must lead to marriage *towards* the formation of a *revolutionary family*. It could be argued that all children of comrades could be considered children of the revolution, hence no couple can claim 'ownership' over their children. The *revolutionary family* could be the entirety of the movement's constituency, be it hetero- or homo-sexual. However, an analysis of the document points to something different.

When the document speaks about pre-marital sex and that it should be avoided, to prevent exploitation of women, it implicitly reveals that its concept of a relationship is still within a heterosexual framework.

In Section 3 of *Some Explanations*, the heteronormativity of the concept of relationships becomes even more evident, particularly in the following lines: 'Love is a natural feeling that grows between a particular man and woman when they reach a certain age.' And in Section 8:

The essence of marriage is the agreement between a *man* and a *woman* to become a couple inside a monogamous relationship and that this agreement is made formal and recognized in society through the blessing of the state... [In] the proletarian marriage, a monogamous relationship is strictly enforced for both *man* and *woman*...the institution of marriage is for the protection of *women* from the exploitation of *men*. (Italics mine)

Furthermore, Sec. B.7.b. of the OPRS cites advice on how to 'raise and educate the couple's children in a revolutionary way' as among the responsibilities of the sponsors and the collective. The discourse on *marriage-for-family* and *family-within-marriage* is repeatedly emphasized in the document.

I noted that within the whole document of *Some Explanations*, this reference to a man-woman relationship and the creation of a family, or responsibility to children appears ten times. Not only is it heteronormative, but it also tends to view women as victims and men as perpetrators, in fixed categories.

As a movement that strives to build organs of political power to counter and eventually replace the structure of the state, the Party has created its own policies and institutionalized norms to address life events of its members and achieve this end. Marriage and family are two institutions that the Party so constructs. While echoing larger Philippine society's emphasis on marriage and

family, a proletarian marriage is held primarily to ensure that revolutionary ideals are nurtured within the union, reaching its ultimate objective of creating a *revolutionary family*, with children brought up in the proletarian way to ensure the future of the revolution. While the prospect of getting married and forming a *revolutionary family* is opened to homosexuals, how same-sex couples figure in this particular construction is unclear.

This now brings me to the peculiar inclusion of *Amendment E* in the guidelines. In the light of such heteronormativity, the amendment does seem ‘extremely awkward and out of place’ (Abinales 2004: 101). If we review the text of Amendment E, it briefly contains only two points: the right to choose one’s sex (*kasarian*), and the right to marry applicable to *their case* (homosexuals). The language of *Amendment E* indicates a tendency to create an ‘other’ in the form of homosexual comrades. Section 13 of *Some Explanations*, mentions ‘[t]here is no reason for the Party to refuse membership to an individual who fulfils the requirements just because one has another chosen sex/gender (*naiibang piniling kasarian*).’ *Naiibang piniling kasarian* exactly refers to an ‘other’ kind of sexuality in relation to something that is considered the ‘normal’ kind of sexuality—as *naiiba* comes from the word *iba* which literally translates to ‘other’ or ‘different’. Therefore, labelling homosexuals as those having *naiibang piniling kasarian*, already stresses that homosexuality is out of the framework of what is considered a ‘normal’ *kasarian*.

## **The Party’s Stand: “No communist is a chauvinist”**

*The Party’s Stand on the Homosexual Question* is part of a larger document *On the Lesbian Question* or *Hinggil sa Usaping Lesbyana*. (2002). This document, a copy of which was given to me by an informant, essentially lays out the CPP’s views on homosexuality in relation to the National Democratic Revolution.

The two-page text begins with the CPP denouncing all forms of discrimination, oppression and exploitation, one of which is *homophobia*. *Homophobia* is defined here as the ‘irrational or baseless fear/disgust for homosexuals and all things related to homosexuality’ (The Party’s Stand on the Homosexual Question 2002: 1). The key to eliminating homophobia is in the victory of the proletarian revolution and the eventual elimination of homophobic laws. Hence, the eradication of homophobia lies secondary to changing the ‘exploitative and oppressive system’ and the ultimate eradication of a class society.

Consequently, the Party finds it necessary to organize and mobilize the largest number of homosexual men and women to join the larger revolutionary movement against the three ills of society: imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. In waging a ‘people’s war’ the CPP is advancing a campaign for ‘remoulding’ the mindset of every Party member through

adhering to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, to counter the ‘unscientific’ bourgeois culture.

The document ends that the struggle against bourgeois thinking—including homophobia—is always continuous and very difficult to achieve. However, it states ‘whatever is started and seriously upheld brings about qualitative change...No communist is a chauvinist’ (The Party’s Stand on the Homosexual Question 2002: 2).

In *The Party’s Stand* I find three main categories emerging: homosexuals, ‘bourgeois society’ (Philippines), and the Communist Party of the Philippines. Homosexuals are represented as a group subject to discrimination in the bourgeois Philippines. Because of this, they should be mobilized to serve the revolution which is the only way to change homophobic society. The Philippine society is depicted as unscientific because it is ‘homophobic’. This homophobia stems from the supposed rottenness of bourgeois/feudal society that breeds an irrational culture, intimately linked with sexual morality that comes from the Catholic Church and is perpetuated in the state’s ‘family, civil and penal law’ (Austria 2004: 96). The CPP, on the other hand, is represented as scientific, and hence, non-discriminatory and non-sectarian. It banners ‘social change’ of the Philippine society and promises the emancipation of homosexuals with the emancipation of larger society.

Therefore, we can extrapolate from the text that it is in the best interest of homosexuals to join the Party, and take the revolution to victory. Similar to the struggle for women’s rights, the struggle for homosexual rights and recognition is subsumed under the overall struggle and objectives of the revolutionary movement which will ultimately benefit all marginalized sectors. In other words, the bourgeois society with its unscientific culture must be destroyed through the revolution, and only then can homophobia be eliminated.

The text also points to the condition that the Party itself is not free from the irrationality that purportedly hounds wider Philippine society, as many Party members still struggle in countering their bourgeois and feudal influences. Therefore, together with the class war, the document calls for a ‘Cultural Revolution’ within the Party to remould these unscientific concepts and attitudes towards homosexuality. Here we can see the CPP’s ability to be introspective, conscious of its own limitations.

## **Looking at the two texts**

The documents I have analyzed show common points on how the CPP conceptualizes homosexuality in relation to the revolution. First is the use of oppositional categorization representing ‘bourgeois society’ and its unscientific

homophobic ways as its Other, and giving rise to a “people’s war” narrative through a discourse on sexuality. Such discourse foregrounds the need to destroy the prevailing system, in order to attain holistic emancipation for all oppressed sectors, including homosexuals.

Both texts stress the subsuming of the struggle against specific discrimination of homosexuals under an overarching class struggle, exemplified by the idea of *class love* over *sex love*. While it is a very novel act for a Communist Party *at all* to officially make a stand against ‘homophobia’ and institutionalize recognition of homosexual relationships, the documents fall short in challenging the peculiarities of homophobia in the Philippines by merely encompassing the issue in a very generalizing discourse of ‘everything under class struggle’. More specifically, the first document engages in the ‘homosexual question’ without questioning either the heteronormativity or its own assumptions about femininity and masculinity, and feminine and masculine sexualities. The second document tackles the question of homosexuality head on, but only in terms of addressing *homophobia* and not *heteronormativity*.

An underlying current of this discourse builds on dominant Philippine constructions of gender and sexuality, specifically in their links with marriage and family. Despite being revolutionary, signalling a break from the system and norms of mainstream society, the movement carries over prevalent notions of gendered relations in the Philippines. Clearly, the CPP does not exist in a vacuum—that despite rejecting the capitalist/bourgeois system, the norms and values of mainstream society still permeate the CPP’s social relations. And it is in this light that we should view the circumstances that surround the lives and experiences of gay men in the NPA.

## Chapter 5: The Gay Red Fighters

In the Philippine setting where the term ‘homosexual’ almost automatically brings to mind the image of a hip-swaying, cross-dressing *bakla*, the concept of a ‘gay fighter’ seems like an oxymoron. The presence of gay men in the army is not unique to the NPA. Indeed, one may have heard of the US Army’s *Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Policy* or homosexual men enlisted in the Israeli Army (Kaplan and Ben-Ari 2000). However, the condition that is peculiar to the NPA, as a revolutionary army, is that there is an organizational sanction that recognizes homosexuals and institutionalizes same-sex unions in the army.

Rather than suppressing their ‘gay identity’ inside the NPA, many of my informants revealed their openness about their sexuality, at least after 1992. Below, I highlight the experiences of gay men in the NPA, their views on entering same-sex relationships within the armed movement, and how they engaged with dominant views about military masculinities. I analyze the situated intersections of masculinity, heteronormativity, and militancy at the level of subjective identities and symbols, and how these play out in the NPA.

### Coming out in the NPA

Before the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992, there was a total ban on homosexuals (especially gay men) in the NPA. Reyna, who had joined the movement in 1985 until his eventual capture by the state army in the late 90’s, narrated how he was continuously interrogated about his sexuality by comrades in the *Sparrow* unit<sup>25</sup> where he was initially assigned. He would always deny that he was gay because he feared being stigmatized:

*They would ask me, “Unsa man, bayot ka?” (Are you gay?) And I would always reply that I am a man and that it is only my voice that sounds soft. They kept telling me to make my voice lower/louder and not to act gay. They said that the masses will not accept a gay fighter. It was supposedly easy for the government military to tempt gay men into spilling out information just by providing a handsome interrogator.*

Gay men were seen by their fellow revolutionaries to be weak not only physically but also in principles. Fears that the ‘enemy’ can easily manipulate them into divulging tactical information by taking advantage of their homosexuality rested on the assumption that they were unable to resist ‘temptation’. Reyna said that this greatly affected him emotionally: *‘No one should ever be made to hide who they really are inside. It is difficult for a gay man pretending to be straight.’* Despite doubts about Reyna’s sexuality, he gained respect for being a renowned sniper/shooter—the best in his line of work. He would later on be assigned to the region’s main ‘strike force’ which carried out tactical offensives (e.g. ambushes, raids) against government forces. Because of his

experience before the Second Great Rectification Movement, he started coming out (*paglaladlad*<sup>26</sup>) only 12 years later, when the move for recognition of homosexuality reached the regional formations of the NPA in 1997.

During the early period of the rectification movement in the 90's particularly in the regions where my informants came from, openly gay men in the NPA were still very few. When NPA fighters and the masses (*masa*) in the barrios would encounter one, their reactions ranged from curiosity to outright rejection. Reactions also differed by geographic regions. When Mohan joined the army in 1992, he claimed that he was the first openly gay guerrilla that his comrades had encountered inside the NPA. He was met with much curiosity because according to him, he was 'as gay as it gets.'

*When I was assigned to [one province], I would wear lotion, face powder and often had a mirror with me, even when the enemy was around. I was not forced to bear arms at first as I was given tasks fit for my physical capacity. But there was a high level of respect, which I think is also because I was a medical professional. But when I was reassigned to [another province] a few months later, I encountered something very different. I was told by some [male] comrades not to sway my hips or be affectionate and that I should act 'manly' with a military figure. There was a time that I really just wanted to leave because of how I was treated. But later on I was able to confront these comrades, pacify them, and win over the masses with my wit, humor and other abilities<sup>27</sup> (Mohan).*

Thus, while in one province comrades may seem more accepting, in others they questioned the presence of homosexuals. When Danika and Amihan were assigned to an NPA camp together with another gay comrade, some comrades would tell them upfront 'you are gay, you should not be here,' or 'if only you were not gay, you would be a commander by now' despite the fact that the policy on recognition of homosexuals was already approved by the CPP then. There was an assertion among the NPA members that gay people had no place in the armed struggle as they were perceived to be weaklings and cowards. Danika and Amihan reasoned that this was the case because their region of deployment was a recovery area whose last encounters with the NPA were before the Second Great Rectification Movement.

For some, the NPA provided the avenue to realize their 'gay identity' especially when they were unable to 'come out' prior to their enlistment. Ariel for example, who comes from a peasant community, never admitted he was gay prior to his enlistment because he said his residential community was 'conservative.' When he joined the NPA, he first pretended that he was 'straight':

*I used to pretend that I liked girls, but I would cry silently about it when I was alone. But I think they already knew I was gay because of the way*

*I talked and the way I moved...I was already a girl. They kept asking me if I was gay, but I would not admit it. The respect and recognition given to homosexuals in the policy of the organization really helped me with my identity crisis. I became confident enough to admit that I am gay. I learned that my struggle as a gay was part of a bigger struggle of the people (Ariel).*

Reyna found the courage to come out in 1997 when he saw that the movement became 'more open' to gay men, in contrast to his previous experiences.

*I felt like a thorn was just pulled out of me, I felt very relieved. I was no longer irritable, and I would no longer pick fights like I used to. I felt free. My comrades understood me...that this is what I am. When we went to the barrios, they would make the masses understand what I am, that I have the feelings of a woman (Reyna).*

However, it does not mean that the relationship of gay men with comrades and the masses were harmonious. While many of them highly appreciated the CPP's official acceptance of homosexuals, their practice in the NPA was a constant struggle.

There were jokes about being a gay fighter, NPA fighters would imitate gays 'swaying their hips while fighting.' Their physical capabilities to carry out military work and combat were always in doubt until the time they actually proved them. As Ariel pointed out when someone asked him if he was capable of fighting despite being gay, he retorted, 'I know how to pull the trigger and use my gun. It is not as if I will be dancing around while fighting is going on.' And indeed, Ariel was able to show his abilities in combat when their camp was raided by the government military. The fight lasted for nine hours.

*We didn't have food, we were all tense, we saw many of our comrades die, but I had to keep presence of mind. I was bringing two rifles—a machine gun and an M16. Our machine gunner was shot so I had to take over. I also carried some of the wounded and tended to them when we had already withdrawn from the fire fight. My comrades never expected that of me. They told me 'even if you are gay, you really are still useful' (Ariel).*

Gay men dealt with such treatment in a number of ways: by keeping quiet and just show what they are capable of; by directly confronting such comrades, or if it was the *masa*, by educating them; and if all else failed, they went to the leadership of that particular *yunit* who would call the attention of offending parties and remind them of the Party's principles. Their ability to bargain for recognition is also influenced by their respective backgrounds like

education, profession, and skills that they capitalize on. Many of those who had college education, for example, found it relatively easier to deal with other comrades because having educated youth were seen to be an asset of the NPA. Danika, for example, was assigned to be a radio operator, gathering intelligence data—a feat that required a certain degree of knowledge and skill. At one time he heard one comrade say ‘*don’t ridicule him too much, he is our pambato*’<sup>28</sup>, *we rely on him for giving educational discussions.*’

While coming out and institutional sanction may have opened an opportunity for homosexuals to assert their identity in the NPA and claim spaces where they can be recognized, it also posed new arenas of struggle as negotiating with existing norms is always a continuous process and may even give rise to stronger forms of resistance to homosexuality in the NPA.

## Entering Same-sex Relations

Surprisingly, only three of the 12 gay men I interviewed experienced going through ‘the process’ of courtship under the OPRS, but only one was able to form an ‘official’ relationship. The others usually had relationships outside the organization, while saying they ‘believed’ in the officially prescribed process and affirmed the universality of the principles it was based on. According to Mohan, it is a very difficult policy:

*It is my personal view that having a relationship should start from a personal level. I do not want my relationships to be publicized. I want it private. I have always been hesitant to undergo the process because I believe that many are still not ready to accept a gay relationship. But I applaud the Amendment E. I see it as a step toward liberation for homosexuals and it encourages them to commit further to the revolution.*

Sekar, a university student who dropped out to join the movement, attempted to court a comrade but he backed out because he felt that the man entertained his courtship simply because ‘it was a policy.’ He also felt offended when he was talking with a high ranking comrade about the policy and the latter commented that homosexuality stemmed from bourgeois decadence, ‘*What next? Would we accept marriage to dogs?*’

*I think that the process is good in a sense that it opens up a space for same-sex relationships. But I think there is an ideological and political limitation because homosexual experiences have not been extensively documented and summed up, no lessons are derived. It would be better if there is a re-examination of Amendment E as I believe that it does not provide full protection for same-sex relationships (Sekar).*



Ameer<sup>29</sup>, from the region that held the same-sex marriage in 2005, tried to go through the process with a male comrade whom she had been secretly seeing in order to make their relationship ‘official’, but it did not work out:

*When other comrades found out about this, they started to ridicule the guy and kept questioning his sexuality. He was not gay. He was straight. And because of the pressure he felt from other comrades and the distance we had from each other due to the nature of our work, he left the NPA without seeing me again (Ameer).*

This would happen again with another male comrade a few months later. He was also ridiculed. She said that her *yunit* tried to settle the matter but she felt that the relationship was not taken seriously. She recounted hearing one of the *yunit* members say, ‘Why bother? It’s not going to last anyway.’ On this point, she echoes Sekar’s sentiments on the guidelines, *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes*:

*I think that the policy is OK as it addresses our human right to be happy in a relationship. But I also think that there is no special protection for homosexuals like what happened to me with my failed relationships. The policy should be holistic. I feel that the treatment of same-sex relationships in my experience is very superficial. The policy that applies to heterosexuals is assumed to apply to us, and it should not be this way.*

In another instance, a few of my informants have shared being encouraged to marry the opposite sex despite having openly admitted being gay. ‘Some comrades viewed that gay relationships are not worth any serious effort’ (Ameer) and that ‘the only productive relationship is a heterosexual one’ (Liezl).

On the other hand, other informants expressed a more optimistic view of the policy. They regarded it as something that finally afforded them ‘equality’ in terms of recognizing their right to form same-sex relations—something that they have been deprived of by the Catholic Church and the State. The marriage that happened in 2005 generated a lot of excitement for most of them because it seemed like a validation for their hopes that indeed, ‘it can happen.’

## **Sex and Violence**

Despite official acceptance, gay men experience many forms of discrimination and violence. One experience that struck me was the revelation of Liezl and Buntog, both assigned to the Mindanao region, about their discreet sexual

encounters in the forests where the NPA is based. They highlighted the practice of men offering sexual favours or caressing them in return for material things like bags, shoes, etc. According to Buntog, he was very surprised that ‘after *we had sex, he immediately told me that he wanted my bag.*’ This scene plays out a modified stereotype of gay men serving as ‘milking cows’ (*gatasan*) for their lovers, but instead of money, the men ask for material objects that the gays have. A good bag or a sturdy pair of shoes indeed is a valued possession when one lives in the jungle. While this was not a prior arrangement that Liezl and Buntog agreed on with these men, there seemed to be an expectation that the gay men would ‘give out’ when the men ‘put out’.

Liezl also narrated how he felt violated by a commanding officer in the unit he was once assigned to, when the latter started rubbing his penis against Liezl’s back when Liezl was doing some work. This same officer also made ‘degrading comments about homosexuals’ (Liezl). In another unit, the gay commanding officer was rumoured to show favouritism to male guerrillas that he supposedly fancied. Liezl questions why that is being made an issue as ‘*straight people also try to provide for those that they like or care about. Even in the revolution, gays are still trying to win the favors of men.*’

Ameer remarked how she keeps being called ‘the pretty gay’. She told me how she encountered much sexual harassment from comrades which she kept silent about at first. She said that male comrades would pass by her and touch her very sexually. There was one time when she was asleep in her hammock and felt something wet on her face. She woke up surprised to see a male comrade masturbating right next to her face. He forced her to give him oral sex.

During the celebrated wedding in 2005, Buntog called the attention of the comrade cook to food that was starting to smell. The latter, who was evidently having a bad day, replied, ‘*What does it matter? They’re only gays.*’

While they do not question the CPP’s stand on homosexuality, these gay men say that a real reason to celebrate would be when there is ‘sincere acceptance’ of gays (Liezl). Discussions about homosexuality in the NPA do occur whenever gay men are around, but in general ‘*there was no systematic effort to put these on organizational agenda*’ (Sekar). ‘*We never even got together (gays) to discuss our situation [in the organization],*’ said Buntog.

## **Disciplined Sex/Sexualized Discipline**

The NPA follows a strict military discipline codified in *Three Points of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention*. This is part of the document *Basic Rules of the New People’s Army* (my translation)<sup>30</sup>:

- A. Three main points of discipline
  1. Follow orders absolutely.

2. Do not take even a single needle or thread from the masses.
3. Turn over all things confiscated.

B. Eight Points of Attention

1. Be respectful in addressing other people.
2. Pay the commensurate value for everything you buy.
3. Return everything you borrow.
4. Pay for everything you damage.
5. Do not cause injury or use foul language against others.
6. Do not destroy crops.
7. Do not exploit women.
8. Do not inflict any act of cruelty to prisoners.

However, when my informants talk about ‘discipline’, they almost always refer to regulation of sexual behaviour rather than the military discipline of the NPA mentioned above. While in principle, sexual relations are only one of the domains governed by Party discipline, sexual discipline is most emphasized among (male) homosexuals. Sex is a domain of a gay man’s life that is a subject to heightened scrutiny in the NPA.

There is a prevailing notion among NPA fighter of supposed homosexual promiscuity. As Mohan shared, *‘gays in Philippine society are seen to be lewd (bastos), promiscuous and immoral. Many comrades still have not escaped from this thinking so it has been a real challenge for gays to break this stereotype.’* This view is held by some gay men themselves, who find that their desires for other men need to be ‘disciplined’ especially when they are in the army waging a revolution. Reyna, for example, kept repeating that gay comrades should have discipline in terms of their sexual activities because the masses ‘would not appreciate violations of the army discipline’:

*The masses would question why the NPA accepted gays. And my comrades would explain ‘yes, he is gay with the feelings of a woman, but he still adheres to discipline.’ I understand that we really had to have discipline because it is the nature of gays to have sex whenever and wherever they find the opportunity (Reyna).*

The same discourse about the ‘nature of gays’ was echoed by many of my respondents. Here, we find a conflation of army discipline and the regulation of sexual behaviour, something that may not entirely be specific to homosexuals alone, but something that definitely becomes more accentuated because they are homosexuals.

Situated in this sexualized concept of discipline is the issue of gay men being ‘security risks’ because of their supposed weakness to temptations when

presented with handsome men. While Prof. Sison debunked this notion by stressing that gay men are not the only ones vulnerable to ‘temptation’ as the same can be applied to those who are straight, it is a concept that still prevails among many individual members. Danika shared that he would be told tales of how gay men in the NPA would turn traitor and reveal information to the government forces because they were ‘tempted’. When I asked when this particular instance was documented, he said he never saw an actual report and that there was no specific event that he knew of.

This brings me to reflect on how the internalization of such discourse affects the gay men themselves. Sekar presented a very interesting effect this kind of thinking had on him, *‘There were times when I was afraid I might cause the capture of my comrades or that if someone did get caught by the military, I might get blamed for it because I am gay.’*

Even the government military seemed to share this idea. When Reyna was captured after an unsuccessful operation, he was tortured for three days. And during the time of his interrogation, the military would send ‘handsome men’ to talk to him and to make sexual suggestions if he cooperated. But he never divulged any of the NPA’s plans. Sekar pointed out this event and expressed how it was unfair for some comrades to keep treating them as ‘security risks’. *‘How many gay men have actually given out tactical information to the enemy? In fact, the people I do know who gave these kinds of information were not gay at all’* (Sekar).

## **The Timid Guerrilla: Unpacking Subjectivities**

On the level of subjective identities, I asked how ‘selfhood’ is attained by gay men in the NPA. A dominant discourse in my interviews is the reference to ‘the woman within’. Because their ‘inside’ (*kalooban*) is supposedly ‘female’, gay men are branded as *mabinbin*, connoting physical weakness and inability to fight. Thus, many would question why there were gays in the NPA. This notion brought with it some ambivalence on how to situate gays in the army, when the ‘inside’ does not match with the ‘outside’. As discussed earlier, at the core of the construction of the Filipino gay man is as a pseudo-woman—with a ‘male body and a female heart’ (Manalansan 1995:199).

Such notion of being a ‘woman at the core’ largely affects how other guerrilla fighters view and interact with gays, and how many of the gay men view themselves.<sup>31</sup> Many times, my informants referred to themselves as being ‘like a girl in the way I moved and talked’ (Ariel), with the ‘feelings of a woman’ (Reyna), and ‘thinking like a woman’ (Danika). In terms of work, most of them are assigned to be medics, instructors, finance officers, and performers (theatre, dance, etc.)—tasks considered ‘lighter’, in the physical sense, and thus, feminine.

This concept of ‘woman in a man’s body’ also brings to mind the construction of a *gendered* and *heterosexualized homosexuality*. In the Western sense, homosexuality is ‘simply a question of sexual orientation regardless of the self-understanding one has of one’s gender’ (Garcia 2003: 63). But with the notion of a ‘woman in a man’s body’, it is not simply a matter of orientation. In this context, the desire for other men necessitates the understanding of one having a feminine core. At the same time, since the gay men are still physically male, intimate contacts with women were also prevented. All this is underpinned by a heterosexualized understanding of gender relations.

For example, a policy of segregation of men and women was implemented in one region, and men were not allowed to sleep where women slept, and were forbidden to bathe together with women in the river. When Danika arrived in an NPA camp in 2001, a special policy was created for him.

*The guerrilla front committee had an existing policy that had me segregated from both men and women during sleeping and bathing. This was done so that there would be no ‘external condition’<sup>32</sup>. I was not allowed to mix with women because physically, I was still a man. But I was not allowed to mix with men because I thought like a woman. In my first few days in camp, I slept beside a girl who was my close friend. I was strongly reprimanded by my comrades the following day because it was not allowed (Danika).*

Selfhood of gay men is partly constructed by instilling these dominant notions. As homosexuality intersects with notions of gender, and with concepts of what it means to be a soldier, the subjective identities of gay red fighters emerge. And in some instances, they are able to use the dominant conception about ‘gayness’ to achieve military gains and prove their capabilities to comrades in order to gain respect and a sense of self-worth.

For example, Ameer narrated how she became the ‘bait’ for a certain military target. She was directed to seduce the target in order for him to let his guard down. Reyna also used to ‘dress up like a woman’ in order to hit a mark. Hence their experience as homosexuals do not only emerge from their sexuality, but from the complex interplay of gender, and even class<sup>33</sup>, set in a ‘people’s war’.

## **Embodying Military Masculinity: imagining paradoxes**

The body, more than being a biological entity, is a site of power. Masculinity and the ‘male sex role’ are closely linked to a context-specific image of the ‘ideal’ male body as a ‘muscular physique that may serve as a symbolic embodiment’ of competitiveness, persistence, confidence and even superiority.

This embodiment of masculinity is closely linked to heterosexuality (Mishkind et al. 2001:108).

In my interviews, the paradox of having a ‘manly physique’ while being a ‘woman at the core’ comes out as a site of tension when gay men interact especially with other men in the NPA. Some of my respondents shared how difficult it was for some comrades to reconcile the perceived incongruence of the muscular male body of a fighter and their ‘femininity’.

For instance, Ariel shared that mostly male comrades would wonder how he could carry heavy containers of water from the river to the camp, or the fact that he could carry a heavy rifle. They would ask him, ‘*Why did you become gay when you have a strong body?*’ On the other hand, Liezl expressed how it was easier for male comrades in his region of deployment to reconcile the image of a gay man in the NPA if they actually ‘looked the part’—i.e. dressing like a woman. According to Buntog, some comrades thought that ‘*if you are the weaker sex, you should wear the weaker costume.*’ And yet, in another scene, some gay men were told to be more ‘manly’ in their stance because they were soldiers.

We see here many inconsistencies with how gay men were dealt with in terms of their physique and their gendered meanings. What I find consistent is the *imagined paradox* between being physically male, and emotionally/mentally a female. I say it is ‘imagined’ because these tensions are not inherent in the body of the male homosexual, but something that has been socially constructed to provide meaning to the body.

In this imagined paradox, confusion arises on whether one should not be gay if one has a muscular body; or if one is gay, then he should look feminine; or if one is in the army and is gay, one should appear more manly—with a ‘military figure’ and suppress femininity (Mohan). This points to the situation that despite official recognition at the institutional level of the CPP-NPA, ambiguities rest at many levels, from the level of formation of subjective identities in the day-to-day negotiations of gay men in the NPA, to the dominant constructs of hegemonic military masculinity of the CPP and Philippine society.

If we read deeper into the reactions/expectations of straight male comrades towards gay men, we find that gay men are not the only ones who negotiate with military masculinity. This ideal applies to straight men as well (Kaplan and Ben-Ari 2000: 428). The presence of gay men poses a challenge to this form of masculinity, and engenders straight men to prove their manhood even more. Thus, supposedly straight men forming relationships with gay men are ridiculed. Sexual violence occurs as an exercise of power over the feminized/homosexual ‘other’. And jokes depict the seeming irony of having gay men in the army: swaying the hips while fighting.

## CONCLUSION

To answer my main research question of how male homosexuality is negotiated within the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army, I analyzed the issue at different levels: ideology, institutions, subjective identities and symbols. I have reflected on the importance of looking at the situated intersections of gender and sexuality in the setting of a "people's war" waged by the CPP-NPA, in the Philippine context.

The recognition of homosexuality in the revolutionary movement is part of the Party's historical development, linked to other developments at a national and international level. For example, the Philippines experienced the strengthening of the gay rights movement, which resulted in the first Gay March in Asia in the 1990's. It was also around this time that the Party included the discussion of homosexuality as part of the Second Great Rectification Movement. We have also seen changes in how the Party viewed gender/sexuality since its inception. The development of the revolutionary movement in this regard has been in dialogue with the wider Philippine society, so the process of acquiring recognition for homosexuals is not entirely endogenous.

On the level of the Party's gender/sexuality ideology as present in its official documents, class is the main category of its analysis, subsuming issues of homosexuality (and 'women's liberation'). Understanding of gender is framed by heteronormativity as analyzed in the documents *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes* and *Some Explanations on the Guidelines for Marriage in the Party* wherein homosexual members are represented as an 'other', however implicitly. In connection to heteronormativity, the Party's conception of gender builds on the assumption of men's power over women. Moreover, while the Party condemns *homophobia* in the document *The Party's Stand on the Homosexual Question*, it does not address heteronormativity.

On the level of institutions, the constructions of *proletarian marriage* and *revolutionary family* reflect this heteronormative ideology. The concept of *marriage-for-family* and *family-within-marriage* is a standard for all relationships, where the *revolutionary family* denotes bringing up children in the proletarian way to secure the future of the revolution. As the revolution aims to overthrow the current structure of Philippine society, its institutions of family and marriage are positioned to be among the building blocks of the structure which will supposedly replace the current 'bourgeois' system. While the institution of the Party technically allows for homosexuals to get married, how they fit in this construction of marriage and family remains a grey area.

On the level of subjective identities, the intersection of gender, sexuality and militancy within the NPA, together with dominant definitions of 'gayness' in Filipino society, creates a subjectivity that is unique to the gay red

fighter. The idea of *discipline* and ‘security risk’ become highly sexualized because they rest on the ideas of promiscuity, as ‘the nature of gays.’ *Heterosexualized homosexuality* is present in looking at gay men as ‘women in men’s bodies’, wherein desire for other men necessitates an understanding of one having a feminine core, and the possession of a male body despite being gay warrants a prohibition of intimacy also with women to prevent ‘external conditions’. By using dominant conceptions of gayness, some gay NPA members were able to fulfil military tasks in ways specific to their social position. Gender essentialism remains a significant discourse through which gay fighters and their surroundings talk about homosexuality.

On the level of symbols, the body of the gay men is a site of power where dominant discourses about gender/sexuality manifest. And in exercise of that power, at times it also becomes a site of violence, symbolic or otherwise, wherein the gay man’s body is subjected to regulation, ridicule or sexual aggression. The popular image of male homosexuals as cross-dressers or pseudo-women has resulted in an imagined paradox between having a man’s body with a woman residing inside. Ambiguities thus arise in dealing with gay men in the army despite institutional sanction, when the understanding of homosexuality is something left for individual negotiations. One thing that these negotiations can impart is that such ambiguities and contradictions can open a venue for rethinking of constructs that seem to fix what is actually highly fluid.

In negotiating for their place in the New People’s Army, gay men have slowly challenged hegemonic military masculinity by using resources available to them—various individual skills and capacities, initiating discussions about gay men’s place in the NPA, accessing grievance machineries of the Party through their respective *yunits*, and adopting nationalist discourses by situating their struggle for recognition within it: ‘*My struggle as a gay is part of the bigger struggle of the people*’ (Ariel). At times, they have also made use of gay stereotypes in order to carve their space within the army.

In conclusion, this research shows that hegemonic military masculinity, inextricably linked to heterosexuality, has been constructed in a way that suppresses other existing forms of masculinities in the socio-spatial context of the army. The focus on a normative model of military masculinity not only makes us blind to other masculinities but institutionalizes further a kind of masculinity based on a heterosexual imaginary. Thus, the space for alternative military masculinities has to be struggled for, in many different levels. The case of gay men in the New People’s Army challenges a heterosexualized military masculinity which brings forth the heteronormative image of the soldier as a ‘real man’ patterned on being strong, aggressive, and skilled in the art and science of war. The enlistment of male homosexuals in the New People’s Army produces not just a ‘new man’ but also, with the backdrop of armed struggle, a ‘new man ready to die’—and even kill—for the revolutionary cause. This ‘new military man’ has claimed a space in the army without adhering to a heterosexual requisite, creating space for alternative masculinities. My



discussion on masculinities in the NPA is not exhaustive, but it provides room to look at possibilities of other existing masculinities along other lines of social relations apart from sexuality.

In this research I have argued not only for intersectionality but for a *situated intersectionality*—as gender, sexuality, class, etc. have their own particularities in a given time and place. In the process of my journey through this uncharted territory, I realize the danger of reducing homosexuals to sex, especially in theorizing. We often fail to see how intersections of other social relations constitute lived realities. Hence, many development interventions have narrowly addressed the issue of gays only in terms of sex—usually related to disease prevention. This reflection also applies to issues of gender, race, or religion that are sometimes treated in isolation from other power domains and the context in which they are situated.

The key to studying the complexity of masculinities/femininities and sexualities comes from understanding their specificities. The case of gay red fighters is an example that beneath the seemingly calm surface of a lake symbolizing official institutional recognition lie many entangled weeds of relations, meanings and negotiations, which this paper has only begun to unravel.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Some portions of the country's population are Muslims, Christians from various denominations, and Indigenous Groups.
- <sup>2</sup> While emphasizing religion as having great influence in society, I do not presume that it determines all social relations.
- <sup>3</sup> My essay, "When Brothers become Lovers" deals with media representation of the event.
- <sup>4</sup> For security reasons, as the armed conflict between the CPP-NPA and the Philippine Government is ongoing, I decided to interview only those who are no longer active in military service in the NPA and are now engaged only in legal activities. Real names have been withheld for their protection.
- <sup>5</sup> Also known as *Hinggil sa Pag-aasawa* (On Marriage), 1998
- <sup>6</sup> This also holds for the Cebuano language which I used in most of my interviews.
- <sup>7</sup> *Bayot, Agi and Bantut* are comparable terms in other Philippine regions.
- <sup>8</sup> Thanks to my friend Roxanne who pointed this out to me.
- <sup>9</sup> Masculinity is not necessarily attributed only to men.
- <sup>10</sup> Filipino creation story, *Si Malakas at Si Maganda*, from <http://www.geocities.com/gcalla1/malakas.htm> accessed October 8, 2008
- <sup>11</sup> See <http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/projects/evaw/vawngo/vamphil.htm> for examples of NGOs.
- <sup>12</sup> I acknowledge that there are other dominant, as well as alternative, discourses that I have not included.
- <sup>13</sup> [http://members.tripod.com/progay\\_philippines/intro.html](http://members.tripod.com/progay_philippines/intro.html) accessed October 19, 2008
- <sup>14</sup> [http://members.tripod.com/progay\\_philippines/intro.html](http://members.tripod.com/progay_philippines/intro.html) accessed October 19, 2008
- <sup>15</sup> A final draft was released in 1977 in Tagalog version.
- <sup>16</sup> Not available under Philippine Law
- <sup>17</sup> Roughly translated as timidity, a term usually attributed to the 'traditional' Filipino woman who is shy and physically weak.
- <sup>18</sup> Lecture notes by Dvora Yanow, Session 9: Frame Analysis, Research Methodology Course 4221, February 21, 2008
- <sup>19</sup> Interviewed on July 24, 2008, Metro Manila
- <sup>20</sup> Referring to a strong sense of individualism which no longer adhered to Party discipline
- <sup>21</sup> From an interview with Reyna, one of my gay informants
- <sup>22</sup> This new version can be downloaded at [www.philippinerevolution.net](http://www.philippinerevolution.net) (written in Tagalog).
- <sup>23</sup> <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Democratic-centralism> accessed October 24, 2008
- <sup>24</sup> The original word *kasarian* has no exact English equivalent.
- <sup>25</sup> Armed units that carried out special military assignments in the urban areas
- <sup>26</sup> From the expression '*paglaladlad ng kapa*' literally meaning, 'unfurling the cape' which popularly refers to homosexuals 'coming out of the closet'.

<sup>27</sup> Apart from being a medical officer in the NPA, he was also skilled in theatrical performances and would often train comrades and the masses.

<sup>28</sup> From the root word '*bato*' meaning 'stone' used as a weapon, commonly used to refer to something heavily relied upon, one's 'secret weapon'.

<sup>29</sup> A cross-dressing effeminate gay, referring to herself in the feminine; I therefore use a feminine pronoun.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.philippinerevolution.net/npa/tun.shtml> accessed September 22, 2008

<sup>31</sup> This also reflects in how almost all of them have chosen feminine code names for the interviews.

<sup>32</sup> Term used to refer to conditions that may make two people develop feelings for each other. This was conceived in a negative way as it usually led to 'underground relationships' or relationships that formed without permission or without going through the necessary procedures stipulated in the OPRS.

<sup>33</sup> College-educated gay men usually commanded more respect due to their skills earned through university education, or their respective professions, mentioned in a previous section.

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: List of Interviewees and Profile Summary

To protect the identities and ensure the safety of my informants, I will only provide a summary of their profiles.

Names	Summary of profiles
Carlos Danika Griffin Amihan Reyna Mohan Sekar Ariel Liezl Bugnot Ameer Laika Juan	<p>Age range: 22-41; most in their early to mid 20's. Upon recruitment to the NPA, average age was 19.</p> <p>11 have had college level education or beyond, while 2 have attained high school level education; 3 are of peasant background, 2 are of urban poor origins, and 1 from an indigenous group. 1 comes from a landed family. The rest are from the urban middle class.</p> <p>Length of service of the gay men in the NPA varied. Most were within 6 months to 1 year, some for about 2 weeks to 4 months, 1 for 4 years and the longest time of service was almost 20 years.</p>
Prof. Jose Ma. Sison	<p>Founding Chair of the re-established Communist Party of the Philippines; Presently the Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front involved in peace negotiations with the government of the Philippines; Currently residing in Utrecht, Netherlands</p>



## Annex 2: Interview issues

### Topics

- A (interviews with individual gays in the NPA)
  - 1 Recruitment and duration of membership
  - 2 experiences as gay NPA
    - 2.1. relationship with comrades and the *masa*
    - 2.2. position and responsibilities in the army
    - 2.3. experience in sexual relationships
    - 2.4. experience in combat
    - 2.5. main challenges faced as a gay red fighter
    - 2.6. how these challenges were addressed personally and by the organization
    - 2.7. experience with other gays in the army
  - 3 Reaction to gay marriage in 2005
  - 4 Perceptions on how the organization should address the challenges faced by homosexuals in the NPA/rev movement
  
- B (interviews with key informants)
  - 1 general policy of the CPP regarding sexual relationships
  - 2 perception of same-sex relationships in the organization
  - 3 perception of homosexuality before and after amendment E
  - 4 How did the idea of recognizing same-sex relationships come about?
    - 4.1. What process did it go through?
    - 4.2. Who were involved?
    - 4.3. What were the main points of debate
  - 5 Reactions from within the organization (resistance, how it was dealt with, how did the men react?)
  - 6 How recognition of homosexuality is perceived to be in line with Marxist/revolutionary principles

Lifestyle / C2
World / A9
Business / B1
Infotech / B11

**The power of the monochrome**  
 Swank, Foxe, 'Sideways' grab top US awards  
 Honda to put up P1.3-billion motorcycle plant  
 Manhunt on for Filipino 'hacker'

**Tapping + B** *Byron / A18*  
**Year of the Rocket: Bumas para sa Pinas!**  
 CALLING BAGA-BAGA  
 CELLPHONE SAGA LINGGOD' Sun 29 10:30am

**Thai leader Thaksin wins bigger mandate**  
 BANGKOK—Thai voters wanting approval to have ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatana an unprecedented second term with an even bigger mandate in a victory presided by strong support from the rural peas and his adept handling of the economic situation. Opponents of the strong-willed prime minister, who accuse him of abusing discretion.

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**  
 BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

**Even PNP camps suffer from population boom**  
 By Christine K. Esguerra  
 SO MANY COPS, SO FEW COPS  
 Unlike the Philippine National Police that number being double-digit, the country's 177,000 police

Monday, February 7, 2005 • P18

# US ruling on Marcos money elates Imelda

**Plan to oust Edong from opposition bloc bared**  
 By Nels Estrover and Christine G. Amadala



**REDS OFFICIATE FIRST GAY MARRIAGE IN NPA**  
 By Rolando B. Princy  
 P18

**IMELDA** Marcos exulted at the news while those who suffered during her husband's rule either took it with resignation, disappointment, or simply gazed their teeth.

"This is 'big'—the widow of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos said hundreds of supporters at Manila had thrice rejoiced."

She was referring to a US appeals court decision that American courts cannot extradite a Philippine Supreme Court ruling forbidding \$100 million in Marcos-related assets to the government.

The decision came as the resurgence of more than 1,000 victims of human rights abuses during martial law, which had been awarded the money by a federal jury in a case last in Hawaii. (See related story on Page A21.)

It came in red and leading a column high, Mrs. Imelda donned her husband's regime had not caused political dividends during his 20 years in power.

"We did not even pinch him, and it's a human rights violation," she said.

In an explosive mood, the Marcos widow declared, "We are not the governments of the world and we are not. They long but you don't have the right to take away the money that does not belong to you. In America, you don't have the right to sue your parent or grandparents, especially your grandmothers."

While welcoming the US court's ruling acknowledging the sovereignty of the Philippine Supreme Court, Mrs. Imelda did not clarify why the award be shared over a similar

## All is not lost, Joker tells martial law victims

By GFC, Calacangan Jr. and Christine G. Amadala

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## Pre-need firm chided for ads

**By Joey A.B. Laxana**  
 Dan Carlos, Balabacan

"IT'S LIKE leaving the rear of a 10-ton truck to deliver in ten days," the exiled Marcos woman said.

Around her were about 10 children and other people who observed that they had been diagnosed for almost a week, fearful that a hormonal attack, as when had happened to the pair, was about to come to their children and themselves.

They were referring to a bull-dog like that a kilometer away from the tribal community in Barangay San Nicolas, Quezon. Carlos went to Balabacan, Pinaric where they lived, a measure only because he had just been released from prison.

Except for the constant news,

## The lion roars to flatten Manobo lands

the bulldozer had reduced to waste fields planned in vain, cannons and other war crops in the area the Manobo regard as ancestral land. Damage had been estimated at P1 million in tax and the soil continues to rise with the heavy equipment's unhampered operation.

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
 Last Dec. 22, units of the residents tried to get near the bulldozer but were stopped by a wall of gunfire. Three persons were slightly wounded.

When Jerry Laxana, a village medic, came to verify the attack, he, too, was shot and hit in the neck. The bullet entered through his heart.

He would have been dead had he not sought refuge behind a coconut tree. Later, while recuperating in a hospital in



**A MANOBO woman shows the newly planted pineapples in a field that was once devoted for traditional rice crops of the tribal community.**

# Reds officiate first gay marriage in NPA

From page A1

help of comrades and the masses. Andino held a bible, as did Jose and each other's hands. The holders represented their "commitment to the armed struggle."

Throughout the ceremony, a choir surrounded them with revolutionary love songs. After they signed their "wedding contract," the newweds kissed and the crowd cheered.

Jose recalled the day he first visited the NPA camp for his revolutionary assignment—a promise returned to by city-based revolutionary activities before their deployment to the mountains. This was the first time he met Andino, who was preparing multi-week materials for a basic revolutionary education course.

Jose was young and had a naive, naive attitude and thought Andino was a typical egotistical leader (and gay), an alien element and a rebel.

Andino, an education instructor in the movement, was busy

with his work and did not take too much notice of Jose.

Besides, Andino already had a boyfriend. Later, the two started to discuss politics.

"I began to understand the revolution and why gays are discriminated by society," Jose said in an interview.

**Started as friends**

When Jose's assignment program ended, he decided to join the NPA. It was Andino who accompanied him to the armed camp—his first assignment.

"They met several times during education training. In the start, it was purely a comradely conversation. Later, it became romantic."

"I realized he was caring and understanding of me," Jose said. "He would never leave me in times of difficulty," Jose said.

Andino recalled when they both got separated from their comrades on their way to get help. It was raining and Andino spent the night alone in the forest without provisions. The follow-

ing day he ran into Jose, who had also spent the night in the woods, looking for him.

**"Sweethearts"**

Jose never mentioned to Andino that he was gay, he would find himself attracted to female comrades.

"I don't get jealous. Even if we are away from each other for months because of the nature of our respective works, I trust him," Andino said.

Further in their age gap on August 21 while Andino is 34. They call each other "sweethearts."

"Andino helps me overcome the challenges and to become strong politically and ideologically," Jose said.

"When the couple realized they were falling in love, they immediately sought the approval of their respective 'volunteers' or cell leads."

It is the volunteer's responsibility to foster a strong relationship within the group and monitor



Gay comrades, Ka Andino and Ka Jose, are wed in an undebated area in Davao.

are assessed every four months.

### First gay marriage

As for the same-sex marriage in the NPA, there is a union long awaited by comrades who support gay rights in the movement.

It is also a manifestation of the movement's recognition of the right to engage in gay

relations and to marry.

Although the CNP already recognized gay relations and same-sex marriage, it was not easy for Andino and Jose to make the decision to finally marry.

First, the couple wanted to change the traditional notion of same comrades regarding gay and gay relationships. They articulated their bases to the principle "genderless" culture in Philippine society.

### On gay relations

"CNP" continued promoting discrimination to make comrades understand gay relations and gay rights," Andino said.

"Gay comrades adhere to the strong Party discipline. They do not have the privilege of gays in the movement. This has given positive results through the youth Comrades (male and female) and even the masses have learned to respect and recognize gays and their contribution to the revolution," he said.

As early as 1995, the CNP's Southern Mindanao Regional Party Committee started to dis-

criminate gay rights in the movement.

In 1996, a provision on gay relations and same-sex marriage was added to the CNP's guiding policy on relations contained in a document called "On the Ideology of Brotherhood of Arms (OIBA)."

Under the OIBA, the revolutionary movement is committed to guide and ensure there is no exploitation in gay relations ship—homosexual or heterosexual.

### What about kids?

During the wedding ceremony, comrades asked Jose and Andino could they really marry.

"Where is love, everything falls in love, including social relations," Jose answered.

The couple was also asked if they planned to have kids.

The newweds said they would deal with the issue later.

"What we have to do now is to work on our marriage and to be strong while serving the people," Jose said.



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## Pre-need firm ...

From page A1

commodity committee, said in a statement.

Three Senate committees, including the one chaired by Reyes, are holding hearings about CAP's finances following reports that colleges and universities have to fund to lower CAP issued checks after several checks bounced.

CAP is the country's biggest pre-need company with more than 700,000 plan holders. Last year, the Securities and Exchange Commission suspended the firm's license to sell education plans after it incurred a deficiency in its trust fund.

A trust fund deficiency puts in doubt the ability of a pre-need company to pay benefits to plan holders in the future.

Companies that provide education, pension and life plans are called pre-need firms because they promise to pay the needs of their clients at a specific period in the future.

Reyes said that CAP was "too optimistic and public spirited as portrayed in the ads." But the pre-need firm should immediately address its "massive trust fund and capital deficiencies."

At the Senate committee hearing on CAP's financial problems last week, the SEC disclosed that as of October last year, CAP had issued P149 million worth of checks that were not honored by banks for insufficiency of funds.

CAP president Enrique S. Sison, however, said the pre-need firm had already liquidated most of the checks and that P48 million remained to be settled.

**CAP checks rejected**

Reyes said in his statement that 23 schools in Metro Manila had stopped accepting CAP checks.

The schools, according to a SEC report dated Nov. 23, 2004, were Pw College University Center, San Bede College, San Juan de Dios, St. Ignace College, South-east Asian College, University of the South, Marikina Central, the newly-opened New Era University, Don Bosco University.

St. Basil's College Manila, La Salle University, National Holy Spirit College, St. Aloysius College and St. Louis College, all in the Philippines, Holy Spirit University, Philippine School of Business Administration, Manila, Deacon's University, National College of Business Administration, Manila, and

Center School, Philippine Agricultural and Technological School, San Jose College, San Bede University and Loyola.

Reyes has filed a bill that seeks to establish a special procedure fund that will compensate plan holders in the event of insolvency of a pre-need company.

### Protection fund

Under SEC rules, a pre-need plan holder of a business pre-need firm may claim up to P100,000 each from a Plan Holder Protection Fund (PHPF), which shall pay all claims within six months from date of filing.

At present, plan holders have no means of recovering their investment to ease a pre-need firm's insolvency, according to Reyes.

The senator sought to address the problem through the creation of the PPF trust in the same way that Philippine Export Insurance Corp. recently promised to bank depositors.

Under SEC rules, a pre-need company must set aside a portion of the premiums or payments collected from plan holders to build up the trust fund, considered a critical component of the regulations designed to guarantee the security of the pre-need plan firm to meet its future obligations to stakeholders.

The pre-need industry has P48 billion in trust funds and some four million plan holders, according to Reyes. Edgardo Reyes, chair of the Senate committee

### Pre-need Code

In a statement, Reyes said a pre-need Code would have to be drawn up to protect plan holders.

"The pre-need industry takes care of public interest," he said. "It is the primary agenda of Congress to safeguard public money through a strong regulatory framework that will also allow the industry to flourish, thrive and realize its full potential."

For his part, Sen. Reyes "strongly" believes that the government should work to help find a solution to the financial problems of CAP.

"There is already a trust-fund mechanism and accountability by different parties on the matter of CAP's current financial state," Reyes said in a statement.

He said the condition was "not healthy for the plan holders and the pre-need industry." Reyes from Christian O. Aranda and Felipe V. Calde, PDP-Walaya Bureau

**Annex 4: Hinggil sa Pag-aasawa: Mga Gabay at Tuntunin sa Pag-aasawa sa loob ng Partido**  
**(Original Tagalog Version of *On the Proletarian Relationship of the Sexes*)**

March 1998

Sa Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas, nananaig sa pag-aasawa at lahat ng bagay kaugnay nito ang rebolusyonaryong interes ng mamamayan. Ipinapalagay na may pag-ibig (sex love), bagay na may batayang personal. Ngunit bilang mga kasapi o kandidatong kasapi ng Partido, nagkukusa tayong ipailalim ito sa pagmamahal sa kauri (class love), ibig sabihin, sa pananalig at pagtataguyod sa rebolusyonaryong mithiin ng Partido at ng proletaryado.

**A. Pagliligawan**

1. Ang panliligaw ay karapatan ng mga kasapi o kandidatong kasapi na walang asawa o kasintahan. Gayunman, kusang ipinapailalim ang karapatang ito sa pagpatnubay at disiplina ng Partido.
2. Para makapanligaw, ang kasapi o kandidatong kasapi ay kailangang kumuha muna ng tahasang pahintulot ng yunit ng Partido na namamahala sa kanyang gawain. Kung ang liligawan ay kabilang sa ibang yunit ng Partido, ang yunit ng manliligaw ang magpapaabot sa kabilang yunit at hihingi ng pahintulot sa panliligaw basta't payag ang liligawan.
3. Kung ang isang kasapi o kandidatong kasapi ay nais manligaw sa isang di kasapi, minamabuting may sapat na batayan na ang liligawan ay maaaring maging kandidatong kasapi man lamang sa loob ng anim na buwan matapos ibigay ang pahintulot.
4. Kung ang isang kasapi o kandidatong kasapi ay nililigawan sa loob o labas ng Partido, kanyang ipagbibigay-alam ito sa yunit na kanyang kinabibilangan na siyang magbibigay ng pahintulot. Kung ang nais manligaw o nanliligaw ay hindi kasapi ng Partido, minamabuting may sapat na batayang siya ay maaaring maging kandidatong kasapi man lamang sa loob ng anim na buwan matapos ibigay ang pahintulot.
5. Ang kasapi o kandidatong kasapi ay hindi pahihintutulang lumigaw o magpaligaw sa sinumang itinuturing na traydor o sagadsaring kontra-rebolusyonaryo o di kaya'y may balak na maglayo sa kanya sa rebolusyonaryong gawain.
6. Ang kasapi o kandidatong kasapi na nakatalaga sa yunit ng Bagong Hukbong Bayan at iba pang gawaing buong-panahon ay hindi pahihintutulang lumigaw o ligawan hanggang hindi nakatapos ng isang taon sa serbisyo.

7. Walang pahihintulatang manligaw o magpaligaw sa higit sa isa sa isang panahon. Kung may magkasabay na nagpapaalam sa panligaw, ang ligawan ang magpapasya kung sino ang mauuna. Kung may nais manligaw sa isang nililigawan na, pwedeng ipaabot sa nais ligawan at sa nanligaw na ang gayong intensyon-sa pamamagitan ng kinauukulang mga organo; pero hindi pa siya pwedeng manligaw hangga't hindi pa nagpapasya ang nais ligawan.
8. Bago magpakasal, minamabuting hindi iigsi sa isang taon ang panahon ng pagkakasintahan. Isasaalang-alang kaugnay nito ang tagal ng pagkakakilala o edad ng magkasintahan.
9. Walang pahihintulatang manligaw o magpaligaw sa sinumang hindi pa itinuturing ng Partido na lusaw na ang kasal sa iba.
10. Dapat iwasan ang pagtatalik bago makasal. Layunin nitong pangalagaan ang kababaihan laban sa pagsasamantala at bigyan ng sapat na panahon ang paghahanda para sa mga responsibilidad sa pagpapamilya habang nagrerebolusyon.

## **B. Kasal**

1. Ang kasal ay seryosong bagay na dapat mahusay na paghandaan ng mga nais magpakasal at ng kinauukulang yunit o mga yunit ng Partido.
2. Tulad ng mga rekisito sa ligawan ang mga rekisito para ibigay ng kinauukulang mga yunit ng Partido ang pahintulot sa pagpapakasal.
3. Ang kahilingan sa pagpapakasal ay tatalakayin ng yunit o mga yunit ng Partido na kinabibilangan ng magkasintahan at pagkakaisahan kung pahihintulutan. Ang seksyon ang pinakamababang organo ng Partido na pwedeng magbigay ng pahintulot sa pagpapakasal.
4. Matapos ibigay ng kinauukulang namumunong organo ang pahintulot, pipili ang mga magpapakasal ng isang kadreng magkakasal mula sa yunit nila o sa yunit na nakatataas. Ang kadreng magkakasal ang mangangasiwa sa seremonya sa kasal, panunumpa sa kasal at pirmahan ng kontrata sa kasal.
5. Kailangan ang tatlo o higit pang saksi o isponsor na pipiliin o iimbatahin ng pares na magpapakasal upang dumalo sa seremonya ng kasal. Sa mga saksi o isponsor, hindi dapat bumaba sa dalawa ang ganap na kasapi ng Partido.
6. Bago ang kasal, mag-uusap ang mga magpapakasal, isponsor at kadreng magpapakasal at doon ay isasalaysay ng mga magpapakasal ang kasaysayan at katuturang pampulitika ng kanilang relasyon, susuriin nila ang isa't isa at pupunahin ang sarili at ang isa't isa. Maaaring tanungin sila ng mga kaharap nila tungkol sa kanilang relasyon o mga bagay na may kaugnayan doon, at papayuhan sila tungkol sa pagpapaunlad ng kanilang relasyon.

7. Sa seremonya sa kasal, isasaad at ipaliliwanag ng nagkakasal ang mga karapatan at obligasyon ng mag-asawa tulad ng sumusunod.
  - a. Ang katapatan sa isa't isa'y kaalinsunod ng katapatan sa rebolusyonaryong simulain.
  - b. Ang rebolusyonaryong pagpapalaki at pagpapaaral sa mga anak; at
  - c. Ang paglapit ng mag-asawa o sinuman sa kanila sa mga isponsor sa kasal, mga organo ng Partido o nagkasal tungkol sa anumang problema ng mag-asawa o pamilya.
8. Habang ang ikinakasal ay pinag-iisa ng pulang bandila ng Partido bilang kapang nag-uugnay sa kanila, bibigkasin nila sa pamumuno ng nagkakasal ang sumusunod na sumpa na nasa Kontrata sa Kasal sa Loob ng Partido:
 

*"Kami (banggitin ng isa't isa ang pangalan sa pakikibaka) ay kusang loob na nagkakaisang dibdib bilang mag-asawa sa araw na ito.*

*"Bilang mga kasapi (o kandidatong kasapi) ng Partido, buong puso kaming nakatalaga sa pagtupad sa aming tungkulin sa rebolusyon at puspusang magsisikap upang ito'y isulong.*

*"Nanunumpa kaming tupdin ang mga tungkulin sa isa't isa at igagalang ang karapatan ng isa't isa alinsunod sa mga tuntumin ng Partido tungkol sa kasal.*

*"Walang sinuman sa amin ang maaaring humivalay sa aming relasyong mag-asawa nang walang makatarungang dahilan at nang walang pahintulot ng Partido.*

*"May karapatan kaming sumangguni sa Partido at humingi ng payo rito kailanma't may suliranin kami. May karapatan din ang bawat isa sa amin na magharap ng anumang kabilingan sa ikatutupad ng aming kasunduan bilang mag-asawa.*

*"Kami ay nanunumpa na walang sinuman sa amin ang magiging hadlang sa pangkalabatang kapakanan ng rebolusyon at ng mamamayan.*
9. Magkakabisa ang kasal matapos pirmahan ng ikinakasal, mga isponsor o saksi at ng nagkakasal ang kontrata sa kasal.
10. Minamabuti na ang mga kasapi ng Partido na unang ikinasal sa labas ng Partido ay muling magpapakasal sa loob ng Partido alinsunod sa seremonyang nakasaad sa Blg. 5 hanggang Blg. 8 sa itaas.

## **K. Diborsyo**

1. Dahil una'y hinihingi ang pinag-isipan at seryosong paghahanda sa kasal, sinisikap ng Partido na pigilan ang pagbaling sa diborsyo sa paglutas sa mga suliranin ng mag-asawa.

2. Ipagkakaloob ang diborsyo sa isa sa mag-asawa kapag napatunayang tuluy-tuloy na humahadlang sa kanyang rebolusyonaryong gawain o naging traydor o sagadsaring kontra-rebolusyonaryo ang isa pa.
3. Ipagkakaloob ang diborsyo kapag hinihingi ng isa sa mag-asawa at may katibayan na ang asawang gustong diborsyohin ay may kaso ng pagtataksil sa asawa, pagdadalawang-asawa (bigamya), pagmamalupit o pagtatangka sa buhay ng asawa.
4. Ipagkakaloob ang diborsyo sa mga kasong ang isa sa mag-asawa ay hindi na makatupad sa tungkulin bilang asawa nang mahigit sa limang taon, dahil sa paghadlang ng kaaway o permanenteng kapansanang pisikal, kung pagkakasunduan ng mag-asawa. Kung ang kapansanan ay sa utak at hindi gumagaling, pwedeng ipagkaloob ang diborsyo pagkaraan ng tatlong taon.
5. Ipagkakaloob ang diborsyo kapag ang isa sa mag-asawa ay kusang lumisan nang dalawang taon sa kanyang pananagutan sa kasal o kaya'y nawala at walang ugnay nang limang taon.
6. Ipagkakaloob ang diborsyo kapag iginigiit ng mag-asawa o ng sinuman sa kanila dahil sa mga personal na di pagkakasundo na nagbunga ng pagkasira ng relasyon, at ang relasyon ay nagiging malaking pabigat na sa mag-asawa at sa mga gawain nila sa Partido. Gayunman, kailangan ang pinakamasusing pagsusuri sa mga kasong ganito, ang pagtiyak na seryoso talaga ang paghingi ng diborsyo at ang mga batayan nito, at pagkaraang mapatunayang nabigo ang mga hakbang para subukang iligtas ang relasyon.
7. Kapag may diborsyo, titiyakin ng Partido na mahusay na napangan-galagaan ang mga anak.
8. Kapag ang isa sa mag-asawang pinagkalooban ng diborsyo ay hindi kasapi ni kandidatong kasapi ng Partido, sikaping ilinaw sa kanya ang batayan o mga batayan ng diborsyo. Sa pagsusuri at pagdinig ng aplikasyon sa diborsyo, dapat kunin ang panig ng asawang nasa labas ng Partido, basta't pinahihintulutan ng kalagayan sa seguridad.
9. Ang aplikasyon sa diborsyo ay pakikikingan at pagpapasyahan ng komite ng tatlo na lilikhain ng namumunong organo na nakasasaklaw sa mag-asawa, subalit ang komite ng tatlo ay hindi maaaring bumaba sa antas ng komite ng Partido sa seksyon. Kung may parusang kailangang igawad kaugnay ng kaso sa diborsyo, ang komite ng tatlo ay gagawa ng rekomendasyon tungkol dito sa kinauukulang organo ng Partido.

#### **D. Aksyong Pandisiplina**

Ang sumusunod na mga malubhang paglabag sa mga tuntunin na ito ay magagawaran ng karampatang aksyong pandisiplina:

1. Ang pagkakaila sa katayuang may-asawa ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang demosyon sa katungkulan.
2. Ang malubhang pagbabanta at pananakot sa panliligaw ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang mula sa minimum na suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi ng Partido hanggang sa maksimum na pagtitiwalag.
3. Ang paggamit ng dahas sa panliligaw ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplina na mula sa minimum na suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi ng Partido hanggang sa pagtitiwalag.
4. Ang pangangako ng posisyon, paggamit sa posisyon at pagpapanggap na mataas ang posisyon, para mapasagot ang nililigawan ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang mula sa minimum na demosyon sa katungkulan hanggang isang taong suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi sa Partido.
5. Ang panliligaw sa may asawa o kasintahan na ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang babala at pangangaral.
6. Ang mga kaso ng panliligaw nang walang pahintulot kapag wala pa sa katayuan ang nanliligaw o nililigawan at nagbubunga ng malalaking problema sa seguridad at sa pulitika ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang babala at pangangaral. Ang panliligaw na walang pahintulot kapag nasa katayuan ang nanliligaw at nililigawan ay hindi gagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplina bagamat pupunahin.
7. Ang pagdadalawa o higit pang kasintahan ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang mula sa minimum na demosyon sa katungkulan, paglilipat ng gawain hanggang sa maksimum na suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi sa Partido.
8. Ang malulubhang paglabag sa kasal tulad ng sukdulang pagtataksil sa asawa, pagdadalawang-asawa, kalupitan o pagtatangka sa buhay ng asawa ay magagawaran ng aksyong pandisiplinang mula sa minimum na suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi ng Partido hanggang sa pagtitiwalag.

Sa mga kasong walang tiyak na taning ang suspensyon sa pagiging kasapi ng Partido, ipinapaubaya sa kinaaukulang mga komite ang pagtatakda nito alinsunod sa pagsusuri sa bigat ng nagawang paglabag.

Sa mga kaso na may katangiang kriminal at may sapat na batayan para ipagsakdal sa hukumang bayan, titiyaking naigagawad ang karampatang aksyong pandisiplina ng Partido at nalilinaw ang katayuan sa Partido bago pormal na isampa ang kasong kriminal sa hukumang bayan.

Ang karampatang aksyong pandisiplina sa mga partikular na kaso ay pagpasyahan ng kaukulang mga komite alinsunod sa pangkalahatang mga prosesong itinatakda sa Saligang Batas ng Partido.

Dapat tiyakin ang masusing pagsusuri sa kaso at pagtitimbang sa mga sirkunstanyang nagpapabigat at nagpapagaan sa kaso.



Sa iba pang mga kaso sa paglabag sa mga tuntunin sa pag-aasawa sa loob ng Partido na hindi nasaklaw ng paghahanay dito, ipinapaubaya sa kinauukulang mga komite ang pagharap sa mga ito. Hinihinging iulat ang mga ito upang maidokumento at masaklaw ng istandard na gabay sa paglalapat sa aksyong pandisiplina.

#### **E. Paglalapat sa Relasyon ng Magkaparehong Kasarian**

1. Kinikilala at iginagalang ng Partido ang karapatan sa pagpili ng kasarian ng indibidwal na kasapi ng Partido.
2. Ang mga saligang prinsipyo at tuntunin sa pag-aasawa sa loob ng Partido ay aplikable sa kanilang mga kaso.

Inamyendahan ng:  
KTKS

Alinsunod sa mga susog ng:  
Ika-10 Plenum ng Komite Sentral

**Annex 5: Ang Linya ng Partido sa Usaping Homosekswal  
(Original version of *The Party's Stand on the Homosexual Question*)**

Tutol ang Partido sa anumang uri ng diskriminasyon, pang-aapi, at pagsasamantala na umiiral sa lipunang may mga uri. Ang paglaban sa homophobia at ang pagpawi nito sa ultimo ay nakabatay sa at bahagi ng kabuuang laban sa pagbabago ng sistemang mapagsamantala at mapang-api at sa ultimo ay pagwawakas sa mga uri at lipunang may uri. Ang una ay bahagi ng kabuuan at nakapailalim sa huli. Katulad ng mahalagang aral sa usapin ng pagpapalaya sa kababaihan, hindi maaari ang magkahiwalay na pag-adres sa usapin ng uri at pamilya. Ang disintegrasyon ng modernong monogamous na pamilya ay isang proseso na mangyayari sa balangkas ng pagpawi sa pagsasamantala at pang-aapi, kung saan aalisin sa pamilya ang responsibilidad sa pagtugon sa mga saligang pangangailangan ng tao.

Gayundin ang pag-adres sa pagpawi ng homophobia kung saan ang susi, mapagpasya at magbibigay-daan sa mas mabisang paglaban ay ang pagtatagumpay ng pambansa demokratikong rebolusyon kung saan higit na magiging paborable ang kalagayan – maaalis ang mga batas na nagiinstitusyunalisa sa homophobia at sa halip ay mababalangkas at matitiyak ang pantay na karapatan ng mga homosekswal sa lahat ng larangan ng lipunan (sa ekonomya, panlipunang serbisyo, at kultura) pati na pagbaka sa diskriminasyon sa kanila.

Mapagpasyang hakbang ang tagumpay ng pambansa demokratikong rebolusyon sa pagpawi sa homophobia bagama't kailangang ang permanenteng rebolusyong sosyalista para makumpleto at matamo ang ganap na pagpawi nito sa pamamagitan ng rebolusyong pangkultura. Kayat lubusang malulutas ang natatanging diskriminasyon sa mga homosekswal kasabay at sa balangkas ng ganap na pagpapalaya sa lipunan sa lahat ng anyo ng pagsasamantala't pang-aapi.

Kung gayon, nasa interes ng Partido at ng buong rebolusyonaryong kilusan na pukawin, organisahin at mobilisahin ang pinakamaraming lesbiyana (at maging mga bakla bilang bahagi ng espesyal na sektor ng mga homosekswal) para lumahok sa kilusan ng sambayanan laban sa imperyalismo, pyudalismo at burukrata kapitalismo. Nakapailalim at umaayon sa linya ng pambansa demokratikong kilusan at kilusang mapagpalaya ng kababaihan ang pangkalahatang tungkuling ito.

Bagamat isinusulong natin ang isang matagalang digmang bayan, sinusulong na rin ng Partido ngayon pa lang ang puspusang kampanya ng pagpapanibagong-hubog. Bilang isang kilusang naniniwala sa Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo, binabago batin ang ating mundo mula sa kabulukang bunga ng monopolyo kapitalismo. At sa pagbabagong ito, binabaka natin, ngayon pa lang, ang mga hindi syentipikong pagtingin sa ating lipunan at sa

ating mga sarili. Bahagi ng ating mga iwinawaksing kabulukan ay ang anumang uri ng diskriminasyon ng tao sa tao at kanilang din dito ang diskriminasyon sa mga homosekswal.

Bagamat tuloy-tuloy tayong nakikibaka sa ating mga kahinaan, at tunay ngang napakahirap nito, anumang sinisimulan at seryosong itinatuloy ay nagdudulot din naman ng kalitatibong pagbabago. Gayun din na kung ang komunismo at natutunan nating mahalín at asamin, paano pa kaya ang isyu ng homosekswalidad na sa kasalukuyan ay nakikita at nararamdaman sa paligid natin?

**“Walang komunistang tsobinista.”**