

## Completion Report

### **The Experiences and Perspective of Women in Panay Island, Philippines from World War II to Post-War Years(1942-1957)**

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This research documents the socio-civic activities of the Ilonggos during the Japanese occupation of Panay Island and how they struggled to bring back normalcy to their lives during the war. The news articles from local newspapers from this period reveal women's visibility in the private and public spaces. Some women continued to practice their professions and attended schools, engaged and operated their businesses, while majority performed their domestic duties of sustaining the home. This research is an attempt to examine the life of women during the Japanese occupation of Iloilo and to expose the socio-civic spaces that women have created, controlled, and taken over. Using wartime local newspapers such as Panay Shu-ho and Panay Times, the study aims to situate the women in their socio-civic activities during the Japanese occupation of Iloilo, Panay Island, Philippines. Using the case of Iloilo, the paper argues that there was a continuity in women's activities during the prewar to occupation years.

Majority of the Filipinos were anti-Japanese and they did all necessary means to aid the guerrillas while they waited for the American reinforcements. However, as demonstrated by the paper, the Ilonggos managed to coexist with the Japanese, that as early as June 1942, people were returning to the city because of the difficulty of life in their evacuation areas. The Ilonggos were able to establish a mutual relationship with the Japanese by participating in these socio-civic activities. Parties such as birthdays, weddings, and baptisms were a common sight in the weekly newspapers. Many of the parties were hosted by rich Ilonggos in honor of the Japanese officials. Movie houses showed foreign films and vaudevilles that both Ilonggos and the Japanese enjoyed. Dances were often a venue of the gathering most of the middle class and the elites. Furthermore, many women and young girls showed their talents in their performances in concerts and galas in honor of the Japanese Imperial Forces. These episodes are far from the image of war that Filipinos remember of the Japanese occupation.

The persistence of socio-civic activities particularly in the city of Iloilo have conflicted with the Japanese attempt to control and limit the women in her traditional place which is the home. Since the Japanese also wanted to portray that the situation in the province was normal to encourage more people to support their government, they had in some way or another supported women's proactive role in the public scene. Evidence to these are the numerous articles about parties, celebrations, women's milestones, even women's economic independence.

Women's movements took a different form with the outbreak of the Second World War. Contrary to the notion that that the Japanese occupation was a disruption, the case of Iloilo proves that there was a continuity of women's prewar activities. Whilst the Japanese promoted women's domesticity, they have also provided public spaces for

women during the war. Intentionally or not, the Japanese needed to appease as many Ilonggos as possible with the help of local collaborators. Women became the center of attraction of KALIBAPI-initiated activities. Although the spaces were limited, and the conditions were unfavorable, women were not invisible in wartime history.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Frances Anthea R. Redison

- Oral Presenter, “Bridging Worlds, Illuminating the Archive: An International Conference in Honor of Professor Resil B. Mojares”

Ateneo de Manila University and Kyoto University

Novotel Manila Arenta Center, Quezon City, Philippines

30-31 July 2018

“Mga Sugilanon sa tiempo it Giyera: People’s Experiences during World War II in the three districts of Capiz (1942-1945)”

- Oral Presenter, “TAMBAYAYONG: Ang Kabayanihan sa Kasaysayan at Kalinangang Pilipino”

Asosasyon ng mga Dalubhasa, May Hilig at Interes sa Kasaysayan (ADHIKA)

Jose Memorial University – Main Campus, Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte, November 28-30, 2018

“Pag-unong sa Tiempo it Kahilway ag Kalisod: Ang mga Piling Karanasan ng mga Mamamayan sa Aklan (Capiz) sa Panahon ng Ikalawang Digmaang Pandaigdig na nakasaad sa Historical Data Papers (1942-1945),”

[Community Cooperation in Times of War and Peace: Selected Experiences of the Akeanons during the Second World War cited in the Historical Data Papers, 1942-194)]

- Oral Presenter, Women and History: A Symposium

Ateneo Library of Women’s Writings and the Department of History

Ateneo de Manila University, FAURA AVR, Quezon City

March 15, 2019

“There’s a Time for Beauty: The 1944 Lakambini Popularity Contest during the Japanese Occupation of Iloilo, Panay Island, Philippines”

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

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MA History, Ateneo de Manila University

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“Spaces and Resistance: The Ilongga in Times of War and Peace” (1942-1945)

(Candidate for Oral Defense)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)