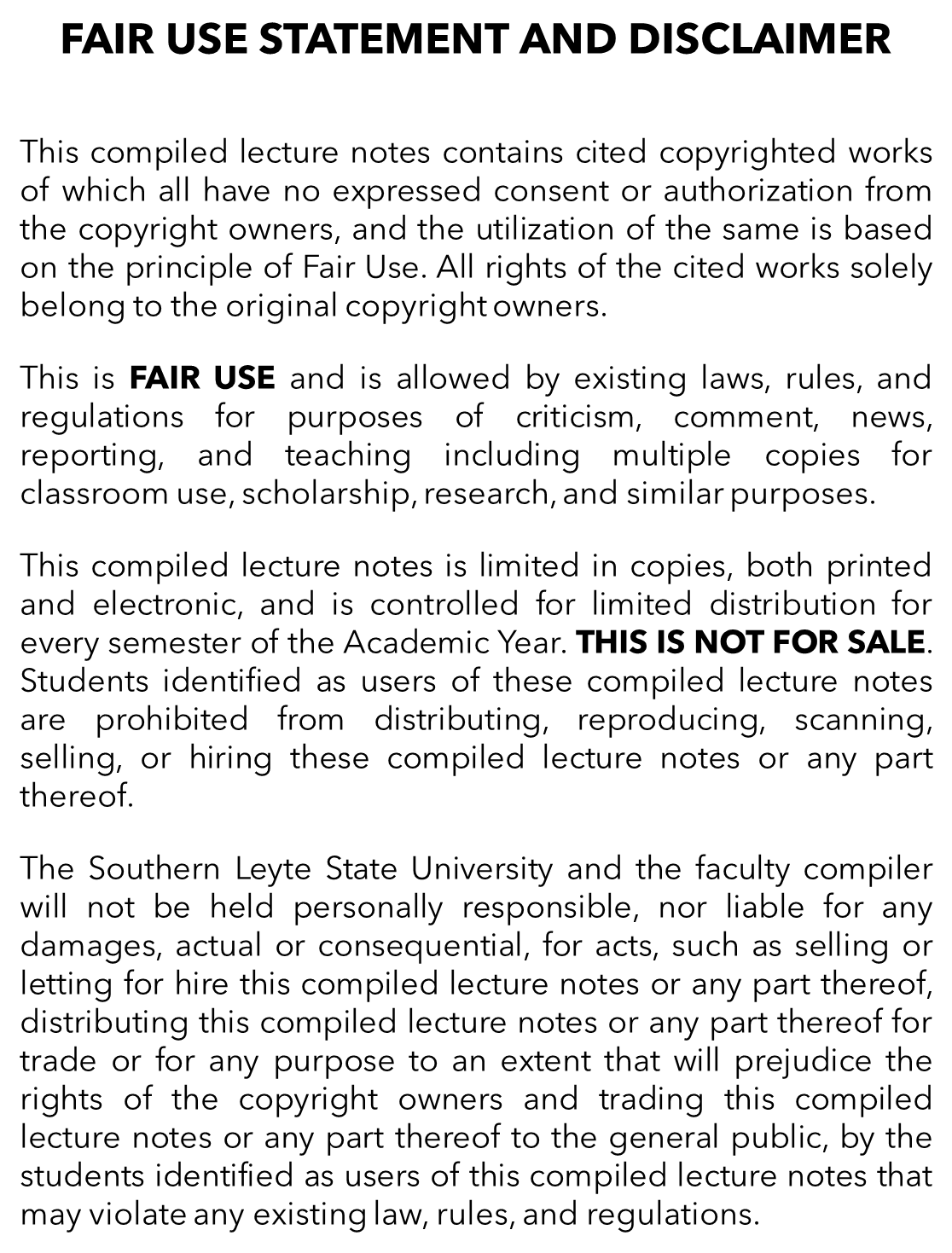
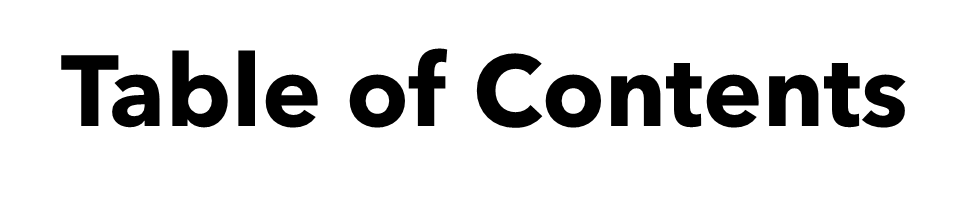
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LECTURE NOTES ON READINGS IN THE PHILIPPINE HISTORY



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**Unit 4**

Social, Political, Economic and Cultural Issues in Philippine History

🖈 **INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*By the time the students finish the learning experience, they should be able to:*

* Analyzed social, political, economic, cultural and environmental issues in Philippines using the lens of history.
* Recognized that the problems of today are consequences of decisions and events happened in the past.
* Evaluated several enduring problems in Philippine society through history.
* Proposed recommendations or solutions to present-day issues based on the understanding of the past and anticipation of the future.



Philippine history has been framed first and foremost within political developments from the pre-sixteenth century barangay, to the Spanish *pueblos*, the U.S. colony, Japan’s “puppet”republic, to the Third Republic administrations. We have memorized all too well these political changes that resulted in today’s kind of politics. We can compare administrations based on the programs that presidents implemented during their term. But, is history limited to knowing what happened when and caused by whom? Is there more to Philippine history, especially after the colonial period, than the ebb and flow of presidents, one after the other?

Social history is essentially an expansion of the historian’s concern beyond the activities of social and political elites. In the 1920s, the *Annales* schoolpioneered the attention to greater social and economic developments and looked at these in the long term, which spanned centuries. Social history aims to describe the experience of various social groups (its initial focus being women and ethnic groups); and fragmented into historical demography, labor history, and urban and rural history, among others. Social history was categorized by the social group it discusses, and later by subject matter (such as education, crime and deviance, and growth of towns).

In this lesson, we will tackle about various social issues in the history, and how it was related to our present-day social issues.



* **Women History**

In the previous unit, we discussed the portrayal of women in history.We talked about how women were portrayed and marginalized at different periods in the past. However, it must be emphasized that Filipino women did not merely remain victims of patriarchy and gender inequality, but that in every period when oppression and injustice took place, they fought alongside men in broader struggles and fought together for causes that were specific to their experiences as women. The women's movement in the Philippines in its present form is a product of earlier struggles participated by Filipino women who were not given due attention.

At the onset of Spanish colonization, natives resisted the imposed way of life by the colonizers. One of the methods of native resistance was the abandonment of the pueblo to go back to their old ways of life; oftentimes, this was led by the babaylan As spiritual leaders in the ancient communities, the babaylan was respected and obeyed by the people for their wisdom, even when the colonial authorities tried to discredit them. Many babaylan resisted the spiritual purging performed by the friars, even if it meant social exclusion. At some points, they convinced their people that the diwatas and anitos promised them redemption and freedom from the burdensome tributos and cruel forced labor if they abandon the pueblo, burn the Catholic images, and even kill the friars.

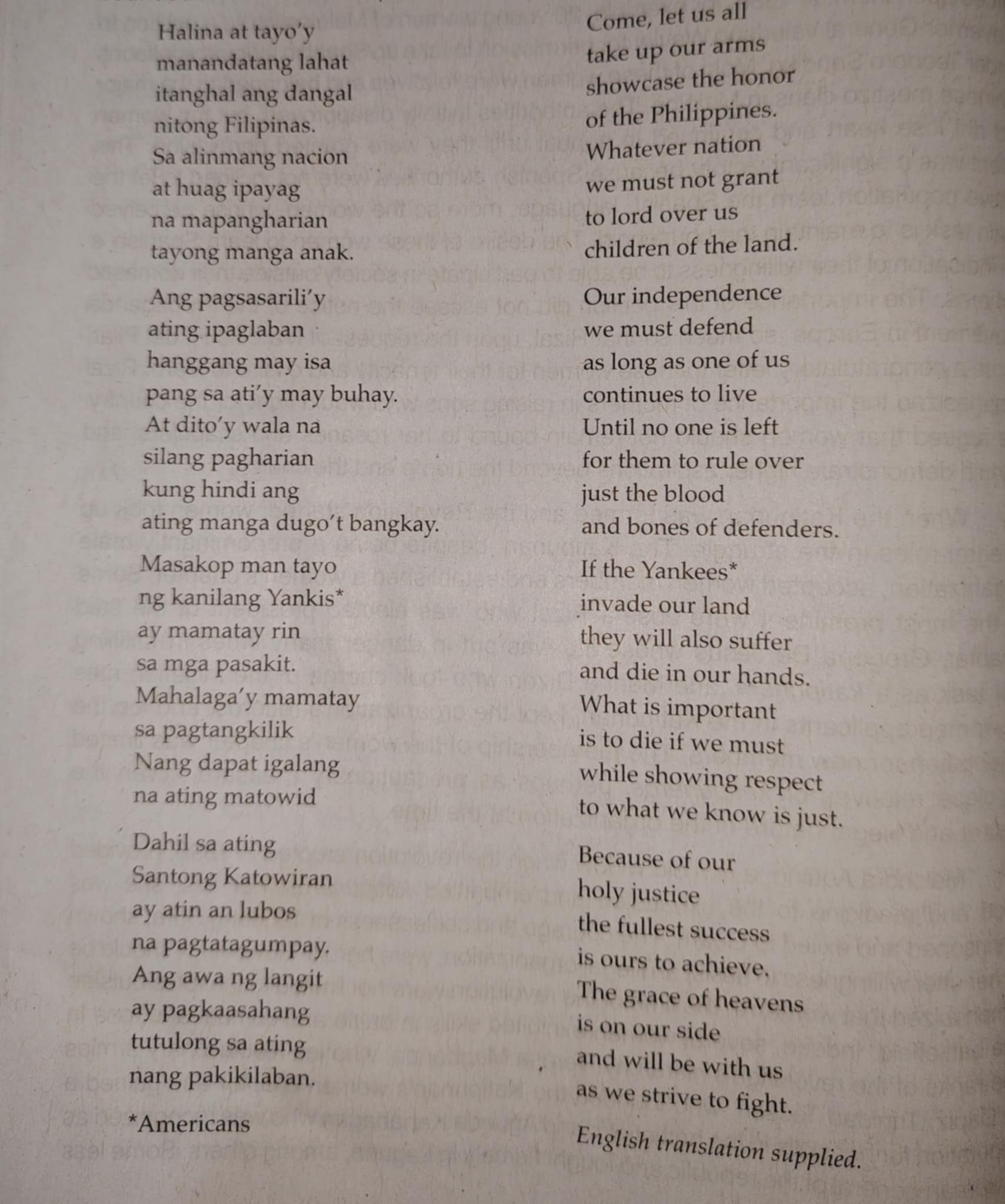
A critical example of a babaylan-led revolt was the Tamblot uprising in 1622 Tamblot was a babaylan despite being known as a male.This fact can be confusing, but there are two possible explanations. First, historian Zeus Salazar argued that men could become babaylan if they look like women. Ancient Filipinos believed that the capacity to communicate with the divinities was reserved for women, or for men who had feminine characteristics. Second, some historians contend that Tamblot was not a babaylan per se,but was a descendant of one. Hence, he was still perceived by the community as someone with spiritual prowess or ability. In one of the earliest revolts that he led in Bohol in the early seventeenth century, Tamblot told his people that a diwata appeared before him and promised that they would live in abundance and prosperity,and be free from tributes and forced labor if they rise against the Spaniards and reject the Catholic faith, go to the hills, and build a temple. Since these promises resonated with the people and their experiences 2,000 Boholanos rose in revolt, burned villages and churches, disposed of their rosaries and crosses, and destroyed the image of the Virgin Mary. It took more than a thousand men from the colonial government to quell this uprising.

As mentioned in the previous unit, women's conduct was strictly policed in colonial society. However, despite the inculcations of what it meant to be a good and ideal woman, Filipino women still resisted colonization. For example, the Silang revolt was continued by Gabriela Silang after her husband's assassination. Apart from actually taking part in the armed uprisings,women also expressed resistance to the oppressive social norm forced upon them. In 1888, for example, 20 voung women of Malolos wrote a petition to Governor-General Valeriano Weyler for permission to take up Spanish language lessons under Teodoro Sandiko. Most of these women were relatives and belonged to the major Chinese mestizo clans in Malolos. The authorities initially disapproved, but the women did not lose heart and continued to appeal until they were granted permission. This event was a significant victory because Spanish authorities were not inclined to let the native population learn the Spanish language; more so the women, whose perceived main task is to maintain the household. The desire of these women to learn Spanish is an indication of their willingness to be able to participate in society outside their domestic spheres. The importance of this petition did not escape the notice of the Propaganda Movement in Europe, so much so that Rizal, upon the request of Marcelo H. del Pilar, wrote a congratulatory letter to these women for their tenacity and desire to learn. Rizal emphasized the importance of mothers in raising sons who would fight for the country. He argued that women should not remain bound to her rosaries and scapulars, and should demonstrate higher aspirations beyond the home and the church.

When the Katipunan was formed and the Revolution started, women took up integral roles in the struggle. The Katipunan, despite being a predominantly male organization, accepted women members and established a women's chapter. Some of the most prominent were Josefa Rizal who was elected president of the said chapter, Gregoria De Jesus whose life was put in danger many times in fulfilling her task as a katipunera, and Marina Dizon who took charge of the initiation rites of women applicants in the Katipunan, kept the organization's records, and led the orientation for new members. The membership of the women's chapter was limited to close relatives of katipuneros, perhaps as precautionary measure, given the secret and illegal nature of the organization at the time.

Melchora Aquino, a rich old widow when the revolution erupted in 1896, provided food and medicine to the exhausted and embattled katipuneros. For this, she was imprisoned and exiled to Guam. The courage and selflessness of Tandang Sora, shown in her utter willingness to assist an illegal organization, were heroic. However, it should be emphasized that women in the time of the revolution were not limited to the roles outside the battlefield. Indeed, several women exhibited skills in battle and combat and rose in the ranks of the revolution's hierarchy: Teresa Magbanua, who led revolutionary armies in Capiz: Trinidad Tecson, who founded the Katipunan's women chapter and gained a reputation for her skills in the battlefield;and Agueda Kahabagan who was recognized as a woman general of the republic and fought fiercely in Laguna, among others. Some less known katipuneras who fought alongside men and at times martyred in combat were Marcela Marcelo alias Selang Bagsik, Valeriana Elises, and Gregoria Montoya.

Lesser known contributions by women for the revolution and the subsequent Philippine-American War were on literature and poetry. Women poets published nationalistic pieces in revolutionary newspapers like El Heraldo. A poem entitled Hibik Namin was collectively written by Victoria Lactaw,Feliza Kahatol, Patricia Himagsik, Dolores Katindig, Felipa Kapuloan, and Victoria Maisig, names that sounded like nationalistic pseudonyms.The poem can be read below.



These struggles and others that came in the following periods demonstrated how women, despite the restrictions imposed by social norms, far exceeded the prescribed roles to them and defied expectations. Their willing participation showed that women could claim as many stakes as men do on certain issues which involved the nation and society. Nevertheless, specific experiences of women necessitated specific responses from them, too. Nobody can deny that the women's experience is unique and distinct from that of men. Because of the patriarchal status quo, both the opportunities of women and the spheres where they could thrive and lead were limited.Two kinds of responses could be observed in these moments. The first response was to make the most out of the space allowed to them. Despite the existence of women soldiers who fought alongside men in actual combat, many maintained the view that the women's place was not in the battlefield. A lot of women concurred with this, and instead initiated organizations such as the Associacion Filantropica de la Cruz Roja or the Philanthropic Association of Red Cross. The objective of Cruz Roja was to collect funds for the wounded soldiers and war victims.

At this juncture, a few women also started articulating the place of women in the revolution and how they should participate and conduct themselves in the struggle Rosa Sevilla Alvero published an essay in the revolution's paper La Independencia titled Lo Que Debe Ser Mujer en la Sociedad (What a Woman Must Be in Society). In this essay, Alvero asserted that women are not silent and docile beings and are vital to the development of the human race. The tail end of the earliest years of the twentieth century also witnessed how women started asserting their space outside traditional roles ascribed to them. In the same periodical, Juana Castro wrote another article titled Rehabilitación de la Mujer (Rehabilitation of the Woman), which argued that women should be allowed to venture into other professions outside of teaching and care, such as law and medicine. She appealed for the revolutionary government to establish schools in every población for boys and girls.

These early indicators of a blossoming feminist discourse crystallized with the struggle for women's suffrage, as the United States consolidated the Philippine colonial state. As the former colony was introduced to democracy, women fought for their right to vote and political equality as early as 1907. The women who lobbied for their suffrage were mostly composed of upper and middle-class women that included Constancia Poblete, Concepcion Felix Rodriguez, Rosario Lam, Nieves Hidalgo, Rosa Sevilla Alvero, Paz Policarpio Mendez, and Encarnacion Alzona They came from different fields and professions-some were doctors, lawyers, writers, students, and factory workers. Some historians would refer to the women's suffrage campaign as the first expression of a modern feminist movement in the Philippines. The struggle was fought for decades. They had to battle against a herd of conservative male politicians who argued that women did not belong in politics and that giving them the right to vote would lead to the disintegration of family life Filipino lawyer and politician Perfecto Laguio, for example, wrote a book titled Our Modern Woman: A National Problem, where he argued that to allow women to vote is against their nature and innate quality as wives and mothers. He insisted that their rightful place should be at home; participating in politics would lead them into selling their bodies for votes and other political favors.

Although these were ludicrous and absurd claims, it still took women decades to gain advances in the Philippine legislature. Suffragists went to public hearings to argue their case. These hearings were manifestations of their eloquence as advocates of equality. One of the most used arguments by anti-suffrage politicians was that women did not like to vote; hence, it would be wrong to force them into this duty. The advocates retorted that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating" as such a claim did not have any concrete basis. For the years that the suffrage movement had been active, the majority of women's clubs in the archipelago supported the cause. They insisted that the only way to prove the argument of the anti-suffrage legislators was if they granted women the right to vote.

In 1933, women's suffrage was finally approved into law. However, during the Commonwealth Constitutional Convention of 1934, this law would be effectively repealed through the provision, which stated that women would only be allowed to vote if they expressed their desire to do so in a plebiscite (see the previous unit). This condition was a defeat because it undid the 1933 victory. Fortunately, the 1937 plebiscite was an overwhelming success, and the Philippines became among the first developing countries to give women the right to vote.

In the next decades of the century, Filipino women would further advance the feminist movement. If the generation of the suffagists were mainly composed of upper and middle-class women and fought for political equality, the next generation of feminists in the Philippines would be more inclusive,both in membership and struggle. They already started articulating socio-economic equality and attracted members from the working class. This articulation was further emphasized during the period of activism from the 1960s and 1970s. Groups like MAKIBAKA (Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan) believed that women should also be concerned with social and economic equality. Her oppression is situated in the context of capitalism and imperialism. These feminists argue that women's liberation is fought alongside the struggle against class oppression and foreign domination. The rise of this movement was also connected to the anti-dictatorship movement. One interesting event that embodied this brand of feminism was their protest against the annual Binibining Pilipinas. They condemned this kind of spectacle as an act of objectification of the woman's body.

In the 1980s,the women's movement also started tackling the unique experiences of women in the third world, which included issues related to national identity, gender identity, peace, and children's rights. Organizations like the Kilusang Kababaihang Pilipina (PILIPINA) and Katipunan ng Kalayaan para sa Kababaihan (KALAYAAN) emerged. They saw the need to address issues, not just on the social level, but on the personal level as well. They initiated campaigns that condemned sexism in media, violation of the reproductive rights of women, gender violence, prostitution, and gender inequality in employment opportunities. By the following decade, the movement for gender equality in the Philippines would expand to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) sector. At present, women and LGBT organizations continue to grow and gain strength as they fight for their rightful place in the Philippine state and society amidst pushback from the conservative sectors in different social institutions.

* **Evolution of the Philippine Constitution**

The constitution is defined as a set of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or organization is governed. Thus, the word itself, constitution, means "to be a part of a whole,"the coming together of distinct entities into one group, with the same principles and ideals. These principles define the nature and extent of government. The Philippine Constitution, the supreme law of the Republic of the Philippines, has been in effect since 1987. There are only three other constitutions that have effectively governed the country: the 1935 Commonwealth Constitution, the 1973 Constitution, and the 1986 Freedom Constitution. However. there were earlier constitutions framed by Filipinos in the struggle to break free from the colonial control.

The Constitution of Biak-na-Bato. A provisional constitution of the Philippine Republic during the Philippine Revolution and was promulgated by the Philippine Revolutionary Government on 1 November 1897, this constitution was inspired by Cuba and written by Isabelo Artacho and Felix Ferrer in Spanish, and later on translated into Tagalog. The organs of the Government under the Constitution are: (1) the Supreme Council, which is vested with the power of the Republic, headed by the president and four department secretaries: the interior, foreign affairs, treasury, and war;(2) the Consejo Supremo de Gracia y Justicia (Supreme Council of Grace and Justice), which is given the authority to make decisions and affirm or disprove the sentences rendered by other courts, and to dictate rules for the administration of justice; and (3) the Asamblea de Representantes (Assembly of Representatives), which was to be convened after the revolution to create a new Constitution and to elect a new Council of Government and Representatives of the people. The Constitution was never fully implemented, since a truce, the Pact of Biak-na-Bato was signed between the Spanish and the Philippine Revolutionary Army.

After the signing of the truce, the Filipino revolutionary leaders accepted a payment from Spain and went to exile in Hong Kong. Upon the defeat of the Spanish to the United States in the Battle of Manila Bay on 1 May 1898, the U.S. Navy transported Aguinaldo back to the Philippines. The newly re-formed Philippine revolutionary forces reverted to the control of Aquinaldo and the Philippine Declaration of Independence was issued on 12 June 1898, together with several decrees that formed the First Philippine Republic. The Malolos Congress was elected, which selected an elite-dominated commission to draw up a draft constitution on 17 September 1898.

The Malolos Constitution of 1899, The document they came up with, approved by the Congress on 29 November 1898 and promulgated by Aguinaldo on 21 January 1899, was titled"The Political Constitution of 1899" and was written in Spanish. The document was patterned after the Spanish Constitution of 1812, with influences from the charters of Belgium, Mexico, Brazil, Nicaraqua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and the French Constitution of 1793. According to Felipe Calderon, principal author of the constitution, these were studied because they shared similar social, political, ethnological, and governance conditions with the Philippines. Previous constitutional projects in the Philippines also influenced the Malolos Constitution.

As a direct challenge to colonial authorities of the Spanish empire, sovereignty was restored to the people, a legal principle underlying the Philippine Revolution. The people delegated governmental functions to civil servants while they retained actual sovereignty. The 27 articles of Title IV detail the natural rights and popular sovereignty of Filipinos, the enumeration of which does not imply the prohibition of any other rights not expressly stated: Title III, Article V, also declares that the State recognizes the freedom and equality of all beliefs, as well as the separation of Church and State. These are direct reactions to features of the Spanish government in the Philippines, where the friars were dominant agents of the state.

The form of government, according to Title II, Article 4 is to be popular representative, alternative, and responsible, and shall exercise three distinct powers, namely: legislative, executive, and judicial. The legislative power was vested in a unicameral body called the Assembly of Representatives, members of which are elected for terms of four years. Secretaries of the government were given seats in the assembly, which meets annually for at least three months. Bills could be introduced either by the president or by a member of the assembly. Some powers not legislative in nature were also given to the body, such as the right to select its officers, right of censure and interpellation, and the right of impeaching the president, cabinet members, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and the solicitor-general. A permanent commission of seven, elected by the assembly, and granted specific powers by the constitution, was to sit during the intervals between sessions of the assembly.

Executive power was vested in the president and elected by a constituent assembly of the Assembly of Representatives and special representatives. The president will serve a term of four years without re-election. There was no vice president, and in case of a vacancy, a president was to be selected by the constituent assembly. The 1899 Malolos Constitution was never enforced due to the ongoing war. The Philippines was effectively a U.S. territory upon the signing of the Treaty of Paris between Spain and the United States, transferring the sovereignty of the Philippines on 10 December 1898

1935:The Commonwealth Constitution. After the Treaty of Paris, the Philippines was subject to the power of the United States, effectively the new colonizers of the country. From 1898 to 1901, the Philippines was placed under a military government until a civil government replaced it.

Two acts of the U.S. Congress were passed that may be considered to have qualities of constitutionality. First is the Philippine Organic Act of 1902, the first organic law for the Philippine islands that provided for the creation of a popularly elected Philippine Assembly and specified that legislative power would be vested in a bicameral legislature composed of the Philippine Commission as the upper house and the Philippine Assembly as the lower house. Key provisions of the Act included a bill of rights for Filipinos and the appointment of two nonvoting Filipino Resident Commissioners of the Philippines as representatives to the U.S.House of Representatives. The second Act that functioned as a constitution is the Philippine Autonomy Act of 1916, commonly referred to as "Jones Law," which modified the structure of the Philippine government through the removal of the Philippine Commission, replacing it with a Senate that served as the upper house and its members elected by the Filipino voters, the first truly elected national legislature.It was also in this Act that explicitly declared the purpose of the United States to end their sovereignty over the Philippines and recognize Philippine independence as soon as a stable government can be established.

In 1932, with the efforts of the Filipino independence mission led by Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Roxas, the U.S. Congress passed the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act with the premise of granting Filipinos independence. Then Senate President Manuel L. Quezon opposed the bill, resulting in rejection by the Philippine Senate By 1934, the U.S. Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act, also known as the Philippine Independence Act, which provided authority and defined mechanisms for the establishment of a formal constitution by a constitutional convention.The members of the convention were elected and held their first meeting on 30 July 1934, with Claro M. Recto unanimously elected as president.The constitution was crafted to meet the approval of the U.S. government and to ensure that the U.S. would live up to its promise to grant independence to the Philippines.

The constitution created the Commonwealth of the Philippines, an administrative body that governed the Philippines from 1935 to 1946. It is a transitional administration to prepare the country toward its full achievement of independence. It initially provided for a unicameral National Assembly with a president and vice president elected to a six-year term without re-election. It was amended in 1940 to have a bicameral Congress composed of a Senate and a House of Representatives, as well as the creation of an independent electoral commission. It limited the term of office of the president and vice president to four years, with one re-election. Right to suffrage was initially afforded to male citizens of the Philippines who were 21 years of age or over and were able to read and write; this was later on extended to include women within two years after the adoption of the constitution.

While the dominant influence in the constitution was the United States, it also bore traces of the Malolos Constitution, the German, Spanish, Mexican constitutions, charters of several South American countries, and the unwritten English Constitution The draft of the constitution was approved by the constitutional convention on 8 February 1935 and ratified by then U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt on 25 March 1935. Elections were held in September 1935, and Manuel L. Quezon was elected President of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth was briefly interrupted by the events of World War II, with the Japanese occupying the Philippines. A new constitution, the 1943 Constitution, was promulgated under the auspices of Japan. As the war ended, the country reverted to the 1935 Constitution. The Philippines was declared an independent republic on 4 July 1946, and the Commonwealth Constitution remained in effect.

Constitutional Authoritarianism and the 1973 Constitution. In 1965, Ferdinand E Marcos was elected president, and in 1967. the Philippine Congress passed a resolution calling for a constitutional convention to amend the 1935 Constitution. Marcos won re-election in 1969, in a bid boosted by campaign overspending and misuse of government funds. Elections of the delegates to the constitutional convention were held on 20 November 1970,and the convention began formally on 1 June 1971, with former President Carlos P. Garcia being elected as convention president. Unfortunately, he died and was succeeded by another former president, Diosdado Macapagal.

Before the convention finished its work, martial law was declared. Marcos cited a growing communist insurgency as a reason for martial law, which was provided for in the 1935 Constitution. Some delegates of the ongoing constitutional convention were placed behind bars while others went into hiding or voluntary exile. With Marcos as a dictator, the direction of the convention turned, with accounts that the president himself dictated some provisions of the constitution, manipulating the document to be able to hold on to power for as long as he could. On 29 November 1972, the convention approved its proposed constitution.

The constitution was supposed to introduce a parliamentary-style government, where legislative power was vested in a unicameral National Assembly, with members being elected to a term of six years. The president was to be elected as the symbolic and ceremonial head of state chosen from the members of the National Assembly. The president would serve a six-year term and could be re-elected to an unlimited number of terms. Executive power is relegated to the Prime Minister, who is also the head of government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The Prime Minister was also to be elected from the National Assembly.

President Marcos issued Presidential Decree No. 73, setting the date of the plebiscite to ratify or reject the proposed constitution on 30 November 1973. This plebiscite was postponed since Marcos feared that the public might vote to reject the constitution. Instead of a plebiscite, Citizen Assemblies were held, from 10-15 January 1973, where the citizens, coming together and voting by hand, decided on whether to ratify the constitution, suspend the convening of the Interim National Assembly, continue martial law, and place a moratorium on elections for several years. The president, on 17 January 1973, issued a proclamation announcing that the proposed constitution has been ratified by an overwhelming vote of the members of the highly irregular Citizen Assemblies.

The constitution was amended several times, in a bid to fashion it in a way that consolidates all the power to the president. After all the amendments introduced, the 1973 Constitution was merely a way for the president to keep executive powers, abolish the Senate, and, by no means, never acted as a parliamentary system, but instead, functioned as an authoritarian presidential system, with all the real power concentrated in the hands of the president, with the backing of the constitution.

The situation in the 1980s was very turbulent. As Marcos amassed power discontent has also been burgeoning.The tide turned swiftly when in August 1.983 Benigno Aquino Jr., opposition leader and regarded as the most credible alternative to President Marcos, was assassinated while under military escort immediately after his return from exile in the United States. There was widespread suspicion that the orders to assassinate Aquino came from the top levels of the government and the military.This event caused the coming together of the nonviolent opposition to the Marcos authoritarian regime. Marcos was then forced to hold "snap" elections a year early and said elections were marred by widespread fraud. Marcos declared himself winner, despite international condemnation and nationwide protests. A small group of military rebels attempted to stage a coup, but failed; however, this triggered what came to be known as the EDSA People Power Revolution of 1896, as people from all walks of life spilled onto the streets. Under pressure from the United States, who used to support Marcos and his martial law, the Marcos family fled into exile. His opponent in the snap elections, Benigno Aquino Jr.'s widow, Corazon Aquino, was installed as president on 25 February 1986.

The 1986 Freedom Constitution. President Corazon Aquino's government had three options regarding the constitution: revert to the 1935 Constitution, retain the 1973 Constitution and be granted the power to make reforms,or start anew and break from the"vestiges of a disgraced dictatorship." They decided to create a new constitution that, according to the president herself, should be "truly reflective of the aspirations and ideals of the Filipino people."

In March 1986,President Aquino proclaimed a transitional constitution to last for a year while a Constitutional Commission drafted a permanent constitution This transitional constitution, called the Freedom Constitution, maintained many provisions of the old one, including in rewritten form the presidential right to rule by decree. In 1986, a constitutional convention was created, composedof 48 members appointed by President Aquino from varied backgrounds and representations. The convention drew up a permanent constitution, mainly restoring the setup abolished by Marcosin 1972, but with new ways to keep the president in check, a reaction to the experience of Marcos rule. The new constitution was officially adopted on 2 February 1987.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution. The Constitution begins with a preamble and includes 18 self-contained articles. It established the Philippines as a"democratic-republican State" where "sovereignty resides in the people, and all government authority emanates from them." It allocates governmental powers among the executive,legislative, and judicial branches of the government. The executive branch is headed by the president and his cabinet, whom he appoints. The president is the head of the state and the chief executive, but his power is limited by significant checks from the two other co-equal branches of government, especially during times of emergency.This mechanism was put in place to safeguard the country from the experience of martial law despotism during the presidency of Marcos. In cases of national emergency, the president may still declare martial law, but not longer than a period of 60 days. Congress, through a majority vote, can revoke this decision, or extend it for a period that they determine. The Supreme Court may also review the declaration of martial law and decide if there were sufficient justifying facts for the act. The president and the vice president are elected at large by a direct vote, serving a single six-year term.

The legislative power resides in a Congress divided into two Houses:the Senate and the House of Representatives.The 24 senators are elected by popular vote and can serve no more than two consecutive six-year terms.The House is composed of district representatives representing a particular geographic area and make up around 80 percent of the total number of representatives.There are 234 legislative districts in the Philippines that elect their representatives to serve three-year terms. The 1987 Constitution created a party-list system to provide spaces for the participation of underrepresented community sectors or groups. Party-list representatives may fill up not more than 20 percent of the seats in the House.

Aside from the exclusive power of legislation, Congress may also declare war, through 'a two-thirds vote in both upper and lower houses. But the power of legislation, however, is also subject to an executive check, as the president retains the power to veto or stop a bill from becoming a law. Congress may only override this power with a two-thirds vote in both houses. The Philippine Court system is vested with the power of the judiciary and composed of a Supreme Court and lower courts as created by law.The Supreme Court is a 15-member court appointed by the president without the need to be confirmed by Congress. The appointment the president makes, however, is limited to a list of nominees provided by a constitutionally specified Judicial and Bar Council. The Supreme Court Justices may hear, on appeal, any cases dealing with the constitutionality of any law, treaty, or decree of the government, cases where questions of jurisdiction or judicial error are concerned, or cases where the penalty is sufficiently grave. It may also exercise original jurisdiction over cases involving government or international officials. The Supreme Court also is charged with overseeing the functioning and administration of the lower courts and their personnel.

The Constitution also established three independent Constitutional Commissions, namely: the Civil Service Commission, a central agency in charge of government personnel; the Commission on Elections, mandated to enforce and administer all election laws and regulations; and the Commission on Audit, which examines all funds, transactions, and property accounts of the government and its agencies.

To further promote the ethical and lawful conduct of the government, the Office of the Ombudsman was created to investigate complaints of corruption, unlawful behavior of public officials, and other public misconduct. The Ombudsman can charge officials before the Sandiganbayan, a special court created for this purpose. Only the House of Representatives can initiate the impeachment of the president, members of the Supreme Court, and other constitutionally protected public officials such as the Ombudsman. The Senate will then try the impeachment case, another safeguard to promote moral and ethical conduct in the government.

Attempts to Amend or Change the 1987 Constitution. The 1987 Constitution provided three ways by which the Constitution can be amended, all requiring ratification by a majority vote in a national referendum. These modes are a Constituent Assembly, a People's Initiative, or a Constitutional Convention. There were efforts to amend or change the 1987 Constitution using these modes, starting with the presidency of Fidel Ramos, who succeeded Corazon Aquino.The first attempt was in 1995 when then Secretary of National Security Council Jose Almonte drafted a constitution, but it was exposed to the media, and it never prospered. The second effort happened in 1997, when a group called PIRMA, hoped to gather signatures from voters to change the constitution through a people's initiative. Many were against this, including then Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago,who brought the issue to court and won with the Supreme Court judging that a people's initiatve cannot push through without an enabling law.

The succeeding president, Joseph Ejercito Estrada, formed a study commission to investigate the issues surrounding charter change focusing on the economic and judiciary provisions of the Constitution. Different entities also blocked this effort. After President Estrada was replaced by another People Power and succeeded by his vice president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, House Speaker Jose de Venecia endorsed constitutional change through a Constituent Assembly, which entails a two-thirds vote of the House to propose amendments or revision to the Constitution. This initiative was also not successful since the term of President Arrovo was mired in controversy and scandal, including rumors that Arroyo wanted to extend her term as president, which the Constitution does not allow.

The administration of the succeeding president, Benigno Aquino Il, had no marked interest in charter change, except those emanating from different members of Congress,including the Speaker of the House, Feliciano Belmonte Jr., who attempted to introduce amendments to the Constitution that concern economic provisions that aim toward liberalization. This effort did not prosper.

In an upsurge of populist rhetoric, President Rodrigo Duterte won the 2016 presidential elections in a campaign centering on law and order, proposing to reduce crime by killing tens of thousands of criminals. He is also a known advocate of federalism, a compound mode of government combining a central or federal government with regional governments in a single political system. This advocacy was influenced by his background, being a local leader in Mindanao that has been mired in poverty and violence for decades. On 7 December 2016, President Duterte signed an executive order creating a consultative committee to review the 1987 Constitution. As the country grappled with the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Duterte administration remained adamant in pushing for federalism, as it is a key component of Duterte's electoral platform.

* **Evolution of Philippine Taxation**

In today's world, taxation is a reality that all citizens must contend with. Taxes are the source of funds that allow governments to function fully. In exchange for taxes, the government promises to improve the citizens' lives through good governance and social services. Taxation developed and evolved through time as a government mechanism, but in the context of the Philippines, we must understand that taxation came with our colonial experience.

The Philippines may have had abundant natural resources even before the encroachment of the Spaniards, but our ancestors were mainly involved in a subsistence economy. While the payment of tribute or taxes (buhis, buwis,or handug) or the obligation to provide labor services to the datus in some early Filipino communities in the Philippines may resemble taxation, it is fundamentally different from the contemporary meaning of taxes.

The arrival of the Spaniards altered this subsistence system because they imposed the payment of tributos (tributes) from the Filipinos, similar to what has been practiced in all their colonies in the Americas. The purpose is to generate resources to finance the maintenance of the islands, such as salaries of government officials and expenses of the clergy. The difficulty faced by the Spaniards in revenue collection through the tribute was the dispersed nature of the settlements, which they solved by introducing the system of reduccion by creating pueblos where Filipinos were gathered and awarded plots of land to till. Later on, the settlements will be handled by encomenderos who received rewards from the Spanish crown for their services. Exempted from payment of tributos were the principales: alcaldes, gobernadores,cabezas de barangay, soldiers, members of the civil guard, government officials, and vagrants.

The Filipinos who were once satisfied with agricultural production for subsistence had to increase production to meet the demands of payments. Thus, a more intensive agricultural system had to be introduced. Later on, half of the tribute was paid in cash and the rest with produce. The revenue from this collection financed the conquest of the Philippines.

Toward the last quarter of the sixteenth century,the Manila-Acapulco trade was established through the galleons,a way for Spaniards to sustain European presence in the colony. Once a year, the galleon was loaded up with merchandise from Asia and sent to New Spain (Mexico),and back with other merchandise. This trade greatly benefited Mexico and China and reinforced the control of the Spaniards Manila received a subsidy from Spain called the real situado, derived from the galleon trade profits. The situado was delivered from the Acapulco treasury to the Philippines through the galleons and stopped as Mexico became independent in the 1800s.

In 1884, the payment of tribute was halted and replaced by a poll tax collected through a certificate of identification called the cédula personal. Every resident paid the cedula and had it with them at all times. Unlike the tribute, cedulas were paid per person, not per family. The amount of the cedula was progressive and based on income categories, but it was a burden for peasants nonetheless. Through the cedula, revenue collection significantly increased and became the primary source of government income. The Chinese in the Philippines were also made to pay a discriminatory cedula bigger than what the Filipinos pay.

Two direct taxes were added in 1878: Urbana was a tax on the annual rental value of an urban real estate, and industria was a tax on salaries, dividends, and profits. These taxes were universal and affected all kinds of economic activity except agriculture, to encourage growth.

Indirect taxes such as customs duties were imposed on exports and imports to further raise revenue, especially during the nineteenth century, when economic growth increased exponentially. There were no excise taxes collected by the Spaniards throughout the years of the colony. The colonial government also gained income from monopolies, such as the sale of stamped paper, manufacture and sale of liquor, cockpits,and opium. Still, the biggest of the state monopolies was tobacco,which began in 1781 and halted in 1882. Only certain areas were assigned to cultivate tobacco, which the qovernment purchased at a price dictated to the growers. This monopoly made it possible for the colony to create a surplus of income that made it self-sufficient without the need for the real situado and even contributed to Spain's treasury.

Forced labor was also a character of taxation in the Philippines, as Spain required labor from Filipinos. It proved useful in defending the territory and augmenting the labor required by woodcutting and shipbuilding, especially during the time of the galleon trade. Through the polo system, male Filipinos were obliged to serve, a burden that increased death rates and flights to the mountains and led to a decrease in population in the seventeenth century. Later on, polos y servicios lightened and was reorganized at the municipal level. Labor provided was used in public works and construction services, while some were served as night guards or other jobs at the municipio. Males were required to provide labor for 40 days a year (reduced to 15 days a year in 1884). They may opt-out by paying the fallas of three pesos per year, which was usually lost to corruption because it was collected at the municipal level and were known as caidas or droppings. The polos were called prestación personal (personal services) by the second half of the nineteenth century.

Taxation in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial period was characterized by the heavy burden placed on the Filipinos and the corruption of the principales. They enriched themselves through their local government positions by pocketing tributos and fallas, while the peasants were left to be abused. Taxation appeared progressive, but the disparity between the less taxed principales and the heavily taxed peasants made the rich richer and the poor poorer.

The United States aimed to make the economy self-sufficient by running the government with the smallest possible sum of revenue and creating a surplus in the budget. From 1898 to 1903, the Americans followed the Spanish system of taxatin with some modifications, noting that the system introduced by the Spaniards was outdated and regressive. The military government suspended the contracts for the sale of opium, lottery, and mint charges for the coinage of money. Later on, the urbana was replaced by a real estate tax called a land tax, which was levied on both urban and rural real estates.

The problem with land tax was that land titling in the rural area was very disorderly. Political and familial factors influenced the appraising of land value, and the landed elite objected to the introduction of an agricultural land tax. Tax evasion was prevalent, especially among the elites. The Internal Revenue Law of 1904 was passed as a reaction to the problems of collecting land tax. It prescribed 10 significant sources of revenue: license taxes on firms dealing in alcohol and tobacco;excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco products; taxes on banks and bankers;document stamp taxes; the cedula; taxes on insurance and insurance companies; taxes on forest products; mining concession tax; tax on business and manufacturing; and occupational licenses.

The cedula went through changes in the new law as the rate was fixed per male adult, which resulted in a signifiant decline in revenues. In 1907,some provinces were authorized to double the fee for the cedula to support the construction and maintenance of roads. The industria tax was levied on the business community and became a highly complex system that assigned a particular tax to an industrial or commercial activity according to its profitability. The new law also imposed a percentage tax on sales payable quarterly.

In 1913, the Underwood-Simmons Tariff Act was passed, resulting in a reduction in the revenue of the government as export taxes levied on sugar, tobacco, hemp. and copra were lifted. To make up for the loss, then Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison urged that tax receipts be increased. Minor changes were made to the 1904 Internal Revenue Act, such as the imposition of taxes on mines, petroleum products. and dealers of petroleum products and tobacco.

New sources of taxes were introduced later on. In 1914, income tax was added: in 1919, an inheritance tax; and in 1932. a national lottery was established to generate more revenue for the government. However, these new creations were not enough to increase government revenues. New measures and legislation were introduced to make the taxation system appear more equitable during the Commonwealth. Income tax rates were increased in 1936, adding a surtax rate on individual net incomes above 10,000 pesos. Income tax rates of corporations were also increased. In 1937, the cedula tax was abolished, which appeared to be a progressive move; but in 1940,a residence tax was imposed on every citizen aged 18 years old above and on every corporation. In 1939, the Commonwealth government drafted the National Internal Revenue Code, introducing significant changes of the new tax system, as follows: the regular tax of three percent and the surtax on income was replaced by a single tax at a progressive rate; personal exemptions were reduced; corporation income tax was slightly increased by introducing taxes on inherited estates or gifts donated in the name of dead persons; the cumulative sales tax was replaced by a single turnover tax of 10 percent on luxuries; taxes on liquors, cigarettes, forestry products, and mining were increased; and dividends were made taxable.

The introduced tax structure was an improvement of the earlier system introduced by the United States. However, inequity remained as the lower class still felt the bulk of the burden of taxation. In contrast, the upper class, the landed elite, and the people in political positions were able to maneuver the situation to their benefit. The agriculture sector was still taxed low to promote growth, but there was no incentive for industrial investment to take root and develop.

Finally, a typical character of taxation during the U.S. occupation of the Philippines was that it was not used to diversify the economy or direct economic development, as some sectors still carried the disproportionate share of the tax burden.

The economic activity topped as World War Il reached Philippine shores. The Japanese military administration in the Philippines during World War Il immediately continued the system of tax collection introduced during the Commonwealth but exempted articles belonging to the Japanese armed forces. Foreign trade fell, and the primary sources of tax came from amusement, manufacturing, professions, and business licenses. As the war raged, tax collection became a difficult task, and additional incomes of the government were derived from the sales of the National Sweepstakes and government bonds. The expenditure of the Japanese military government grew substantially,and they issued military notes to cover the costs of the war.

The impact of the war on the Philippine economy was effectively disparate, as the capital Manila was razed to the ground while the rest of the Philippines was relatively untouched. But the highly agriculture-based economy was disrupted. The United States may have declared the Philippines independent, but, as the country badly needed rehabilitation funds, the United States took advantage to keep the Philippines dependent on them. The economic situation was so problematic that by 1949, there was a severe lack of funds in many aspects of governance, such as the military and education sectors. No efforts were made to improve tax collection, while the United States advised the adoption of direct taxation. The administration of President Manuel Roxas declined the proposal because it did not want to alienate its allies in Congress.

The impetus for economic growth came during the time of President Elpidio Quirino through the implementation of import and exchange contols that led to import substitution development. This policy allwed for the expansion of a viable manufacturing sector that reduced economic dependence on imports. New tax measures were also passed, which included higher corporate tax rates that increased government revenues. Tax revenue in 1953 increased twofold compared to 1948, the year when Quirino first assumed the presidency.

While the succeeding presidencies of Magsaysay, Garcia, and Macapagal promised to study the tax structure and policy of the country through the creation ofa Tax Commission in 1959 to make way for a more robust and efficient tax collection scheme, postwar fiscal policy remained regressive. The economic system was characterized by the overburdening of the lowest classes, while the landed elite who held business interests were in Congress to ensure that taxes will not be levied to them. The period of the postwar republic also saw a rise in corruption. From 1959 to 1968, Congress did not pass any tax legislation despite essential changes in the economy, and the vested interests of Filipino businesses in Congress manifested in many instances, such as the rejection of taxes on imports. Indirect taxation still contributed to three-quarters of tax revenues, and the Omnibus Tax Law of 1969 did not increase the ratio of income tax to general tax revenue. Tax collection remained weak, the tax structure was stil problematic, and much of public funds were lost to corruption, leaving the government incapable of funding necessary development projects.

Under the Marcos authoritarian regime, the tax system remained regressive During the latter part of the Marcos years (1981-1985),the tax system was stil heavily dependent on indirect taxes that composed 70 percent of total tax collection. The tax system also remained unresponsive. Taxes grew at an average annual rate of 15 percent and generated a low tax yield. Tax effort, defined as the ratio between the share of the actual tax collection in gross domestic product and predictable taxable capacity, was at a low 10.7 percent.

As Corazon Aquino took the helm of the government after the EDSA Revolution, she reformed the tax system through the 1986 Tax Reform Program. The aim was to improve the responsiveness of the tax system, promote equity by ensuríng that similarly situated individuals and firms bear the same tax burden, promote growth by withdrawing or modifying taxes that reduce incentives to work or produce, and improve tax administration by simplifying the tax system and promoting tax compliance.

A significant reform in the tax system introduced under the term of Aquíno was the introduction of the value-added tax (VAT). The VAT'S most prominent feature is the uniform rate of 10 percent on the sale of domestic and imported goods and services and zero percent on exports and foreign-currency-denominated sales. The VAT law was signed in 1986 and put to effect in 1988. While it was a reliable source of revenue for the government, new tax laws reduced its reliability as legislated exemptions grew. Along with tax reform came the administrative changes, such as the restructuring of the Department of Finance and its attached agency, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), through Executive Order No. 127. Tax collection and tax audits were intensified, computerization was introduced, and corruption was relatively reduced, which improved the trust in the BIR in general. As a result of the tax reform of the Aquino administration, both tax and revenue efforts rose, increasing from 10.7 percent in 1985 to 15.4 percent in 1992.

Greater political stability during the administration of Fidel Ramos in 1992 allowed for continued economic growth. The Ramos administration ventured into its tax reform program in 1997 through the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program, which was implemented to make the tax system broad-based, simple, and with reasonable tax rates; minimize tax avoidance allowed by existing flaws and loopholes in the system; encourage payments by increasing tax exemptions levels, lowering the highest tax rates, and simplifying procedure; and rationalize the grant of tax incentives, which was estimated to be worth 531.7 billion in 1994. The VAT base was also broadened in 1997 to include services, through Republic Act No. 7716.

The following term of President Joseph Estrada in 1998 was too short to effect any change in the tax system. His successor, Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo undertook increased government spending without adjusting tax collections, resulting in substantial deficits from 2002 to 2004. The government had to find additional sources of révenue. In 2005, the Expanded Value Added Tax (E-VAT) was signed into law as Republic Act No. 9337. This law expanded the VAT base, subjecting to VAT energy products suchas coal and petroleum products and electricity generation, transmission, and distribution. Selected professional services were also taxed. In February 2006, the VAT tax rate was also increased to 12 percent.

As President Benigno Aquino III succeeded President Arroyo in 2010,he promised that no new taxes would be imposed, and additional revenue would have to come from adjusting existing taxes. The administration ventured into the adjustment of excise tax on liquor and cigarettes or the Sin Tax Reform, motivations for which were primarily fiscal, and related to public health and social order. Governmentrevenues from alcohol and tobacco excise taxes increased. Collections from tobacco and alcohol in 2015 made up 1.1 percent of the gross domestic product, and the improvement in tax collection resulted in the Philippines receiving a credit rating upgrade into investment-grade status.The Sin Tax Reform was an exemplar on how tax reform could impact social services, as it allowed for the increase of the Department of Health budget (triple in 2015) and free health insurance premiums for the poor people enrolled in PhilHealth increased (from 55.2 million in 2012 to 515.4 million in 2015).

In 2016, the administration of the new president, Rodrigo Duterte, promised tax reform. Reform focused particularly on income taxes, as the government vowed to lower income tax rates shouldered by working Filipinos. The present income tax scheme of the country is the second-highest in Southeast Asia, and he current laws on income taxes were outdated, as they were drafted two decades ago. In December 2017,the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act was passed. Its prominent feature was lower income taxes: annual incomes not ехсееdіng 250,000 реsоs аrе tах-ехеmрt. Тах rаtеs fоr hіghеr іпсоmеs fоllоw а progressive scheme, with a maximum tax rate of 35 percent and a minimum of 20 реrсеnt untіl 2022, аnd 15 реrсеnt frоm 202З оnwаrd. Соnsumрtіоn tахеs оn tobacco products, sweetened beverages,petroleum products, and automobiles were increased, while nonessential, invasive cosmetic procedures are now taxed. The law also expanded the VAT base and repealed exemptions in several special laws. In the first quarter of 2018, tax revenues of the government increased, but inflation rates exceeded the projected calculations. The adverse effects caused an uproar, with some senators calling for the suspension of the law. The government argued that these are just birthing pains,and inflation will also normalize. In May 2020, inflation stood at 2.1 percent. The Duterte administration's economic team projects that the country's growth potential in 2021 will accelerate once the impact of government money support measures gain traction.

* **Philippine Festivals and Celebrations**

Philippine Festivals and Celebrations Filipinos are familiar with fiestasor festivals. From the barangay to the provincial levels, each has an assigned date in the year to get together and celebrate as one big community; the streets adorned with colorful buntings and people cooking the best specialties in big pots while everyone waited for the colorful parade to pass. These are the "socio-cultural high points of the year." Visitors would come and join in this celebration, which is usually held but not limited to honor a particular patron saint of the Christian faith. Some of the most known festivals are the Feast of the Black Nazarene, Feast of the Sto. Niño, Sinulog, Ati-Atihan, Dinagyang, Panagbenga MassKara, Kadayawan, Pahiyas, Moriones, and Zamboanga Hermosa.

The Sto. Niño de Cebu devotion is a symbol of the beginning of Christianity in the Philippines. Magellan gifted a Holy Image to Queen Juana and baptized natives in Cebu in 1521. It was a significant unique union of the foreign image to the native beliefs of anito and anting-anting; an acculturation of the Holy Infant into a system of indigenous folk beliefs and practices. Folk practices such as the Sinulug ritual dance took in Catholic and Spanish symbolism and practices. The Sto. Niño de Cebu devotion holds numerous stories of favors from and miracles of the Sto. Niño where there are around five thousand versions of the Holy Infant.

The Spaniards thought of Christianity as the catalyst in gathering the Filipinos to a common faith, attitudes, and behavior-all to advance Spanish administrative hold in all established reducciones. The Spanish friars saw that they had to use the festivities to attract rural natives to the new faith established in urban centers; hence, they made the festivals more colorful and inviting."The purpose was to promote an impressive image of the grandeur and splendor of the Catholic Church, to anchor the Christian message more strongly in the minds of the population, and to outshine through extravagance and color the pre-colonial festival culture and customs."No other event than the festivals could gather maximum audiences to influence, this time not confined only to catechism but to Spanish interests. Slowly, resettlement under Spanish design gained momentum. First performed in a church in 1637, the "Una gran comedia de la toma del Pueblo de Corralat, conquista del Cerro" later became a street drama titled Moros y Cristianos t is both a visual narrative and a celebration of the Christian victory of Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera over the Muslim Cachil Corralat. This event transformed into the comedia or moro-moro form of street performance during festivals, Its story evolved from Christian-Moro conflicts and carried similar themes, eventually ending with the Moro being killed or defeated. Thus, the antagonism between peoples based on religious beliefs also became codified in such performances.

But eventually, in the seventeenth century, even Moros became curíous about the festivities that happened in Zamboanga, that they too visited the church there; there were even fireworks and bullfights. In 1641, Easter in Zamboanga celebrated the passion and death of Christ through masses, the erection of a Holy Sepulcher, and processions. The attendees, including Moros, were so impressed that they asked about the meanings of what they had just seen; the Spanish priests were elated.

Reinhard Wendt (1998), in a study of fiestas and colonial culture, summarized a festival as follows:

Priests donned their splendid robes. Lighted processions with illuminated festival carriages bearing pictures of the saints, bejeweled and wreathed with flowers, glowing in the light of candles and oil-lamps, were an awe-inspiring spectacle. Song and dance, theater and zarzuela performances fancy dress parades, balls and festival banquets, fireworks and cockfights, sporting competitions and tests of skill, as well as fairs, agricultural shows and trade displays increased the attraction of the festivities further still. In the multitude of people which flocked together on these occasions, the Jesuits found an eager audience for their ideas and teachings. Their sermons were heard by an unusually large number of listeners. The people pressed forward in front of the confessionals, which boosted the sanctioning, disciplining, and norm-fixing effect of this sacrament. Instead of merely preaching the Christian message from the pulpit, or forcing its norms in the confessional, the padres were also able to dress this message in the processions, songs, dance or plays, in festival decoration and architecture, or even in pyrotechnics. Small bamboo canons were not only fired to produce noise, they also saluted Madonna and the saints, marked with their explosions the highlights of a Mass and accompanied processions.

At present, these folk Catholic festivals and celebrations are still celebrated throughout the year, even several times in a single month. But religious Catholic rituals are most simultaneously observed during the Holy Week. The Pasyon, an epic narrative of the life of Christ takes formin masses, songs, and even enactments, the most intense (and contested) of which happens annually in Pampanga for around 60 years now. In the reenactment of the crucifixion in San Pedro Cutud town, about 20 or so penitents walk barefoot while flagellating themselves, then carrying a wooden cross toward a hill; upon reaching the hill, some penitents would be nailed to the cross and hanged on a crucifix state for a few minutes. The Philíppine clergy admits that this practice is not Catholic at all, but the Auxiliary Bishop of San Fernando Pablo Virgilio David stated, "I do not think it is right to close our doors to them just because they are more attracted to these folk practices than to our Roman liturgy which they may find too foreign or cerebral." When a penitent was asked why he devoted himself to the tradition for several years, enduring the pain, he replied,"TwO years ago, I said it would be the last time I'd do it. But every time I say that, my wife gets sick. I guess God wants me to continue this sacrifice as a lifetime vow." The syncretism in the Cutud Pasion is all too visible: the literal crucifixion is not Catholic, and getting sick was a warning or sign from God.

The Moros of Mindanao had a different experience as they syncretized pre-Islamic beliefs and ways with "official" Islam in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and even Christianity around the seventeenth century. Bill Musk, in observing folk Islam in Africa in 1989,said:

Popular Islam has added a whole life-way of animistic beliefs and practices. The use of the rosary for divining and healing, the use of amulets and talismans.., the use of hair-cuttings and nail-trimmings, the belief and practice of saint-worship, the use of charms, knots, magic, sorcery, the exorcism of demons, the practice of tree and stone worship, cursing and blessing these and many other animistic practices belie the gap between the theological religion and the actual religion.

The Moros of Mindanao experienced syncretism in three ways: indigenous Islamic, and Christian. An exciting place to find a manifestation of this is the Fort Pilar (Real Fuerza de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zaragoza) in Zamboanga City, where the Hermosa festival is celebrated every October. Catholics, Christians, and even "Muslims" visit Fort Pilar to light a candle, say a prayer, or make a wish. This should be analyzed in context: the Christians would not do the Visita Iglesia during Holy Week but would participate in the Hermosa festival, and the Moros who participate are those more linked to their cultural pre-Islamic background. Folk Islam is also manifest in opulent "Muslim" weddings that are so grand, the engagement alone shows a long line of vehicles decorated with bright colors and filled with all sorts of foods and delicacies to be brought and offered to the bride's familv. In Islamic teachings though, the most blessed union is one that was conducted the simplest.

Discourse on festivals in Philippine history posits that these celebrations were breathers to a community that was otherwise preoccupied with and constrained by everyday life, a chance for them to form and confirm identity. Festivals were also seen as transmitters of Spanish ideas, values, and concepts toward strengthening the Spanish rule. But the celebrations and festivals also became venues of mingling and sharing where collective attitudes were formed. Eventually, even the Revolutionary movement, particularly the KKK, would link the Pasyon to evoke similar emotions of the suffering of Filipinos under the Spanish rule.

Studying festivals and celebrations, especially of the IPs, reflects a portion of their history as well. Similar to oral traditions and epics, festivals are also considered elements of the country's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) that need to be recorded. Take for example in the study of Chan in 2017: as part of the Lenten celebrations, the Moriones Festival of Marinduque "has exhibited various problems regarding a decreasing historical value, political intervention and increasing detachment from the Marinduque community.... If the self-identity of Marinduque locals to the Moriones festival and the artisanship of making morion masks cannot be realized and transmitted, the soul of the Moriones and the heart of Marinduque can only be unconsciously lost and forgotten in time."

Festivals once became a double-edged sword used by the Spaniards to further their hold on the Filipinos, and it was in the very same festivals that the Katipuneros called toward freedom from the Spaniards. Through the centuries, festivals have picked up indigenous and foreign elements to make up a distinct Philippine festival culture, continuing to shape and be shaped by values and attitudes.

* **Diseases and Epidemics**

Diseases and Epidemics The toll of COVID-19 in the Philippines has made the risk of epidemics and pandemics a reality, even if many were dismissive of how it could change our everyday activities. How did Filipinos deal with such a deadly disease in our history, without access to all the advanced technologies we have today? What lessons can we learn from our past experiences with epidemics and pandemics?

Before the mid-nineteenth century, Filipinos were not at serious demographic risk as a whole. The character of the population explains this limited susceptibility-communities are dispersed, and personal contact is limited. Thus, the physical and cultural environments of the Philippines did not enable epidemics to spread, and the limited capacity for inter-island travel for a majority of the population stopped outbreaks from spreading throughout the islands. Some diseases existed before the Spanish contact, such as intestinal diseases, malaria, dengue, leprosy, and yaws,among others. These were not significant killers but could have played a role in the retardation of population growth in the islands.

When the Spaniards arrived, the Philippine archipelago had an estimated population of 1.2 million, scattered among numerous islands, and infectious diseases had a hard time to spread among the communities. The Spaniards encountered leper bands living apart from the main settlements, proof that there must have been a practice of isolation for those who contracted infectious diseases. As early as 1577, leprosy hospitals were established in Naga and Manila. The San Lazaro Hospital, established in Intramuros, was one of the many San Lazaro hospitals in the Spanish empire that were created for lepers and other diseases. At that time, leprosy had no cure, so care for lepers was more for humanitarian than therapeutic aims.

In the early Spanish colonial period, epidemics, if they do strike, are limited to outbreaks in particular localities and do not spread far and wide as they did in the later centuries. Smallpox, for example, was first recorded to have arrived in Luzon in 1574 and caused a severe outbreak in Manila in 1591. However, Filipinos did not suffer or die of diseases like these in wholesale, but rather at the hands of the conquistadors and their conquest campaigns.The traditional settlement pattern of the barangay was transformed to create villages and bring the Filipinos "under the bells" of the church, making it easier for the Spaniards to govern their colonial subjects administratively. As the Spanish campaign managed to defeat the resisting inhabitants, the population gradually increased, making the possibility of epidemics a bit closer to reality. The creation of new towns, one by one, and the construction of roads that link them, slowly built up critical volume and velocity of human movement that made epidemics possible, as seen in smallpox that affected the Igorot people in 1740 to 1741, as a road opened from Manila to Cagayan in 1739.

Another factor that enabled the spread of epidemics was the Philippines' commercial relations that expanded in the nineteenth century,and port areas growing rapidly: Sual, Manila, Legaspi,Cebu, Iloilo, Tacloban, Zamboanga, and hundreds of local ports; these gateways to the Philippines allowed for the trading of goods and were accessible to foreign vessels since the end of the galleon trade; riverine commerce made the traded products available to the local population. This situation provided the necessary geographical conditions for the unchecked spread of communicable diseases in the country.

The nineteenth century also witnessed an agricultural and commercial revolution through the cash crop economy that exploited the economic potential of the Philippines fertile lands to produce crops for the world economy. With the economic boom came the increase in the probability of contact with infective human and animal hosts mainly because of the enabling environment brought about by the rapid developments of the time. It also changed the Filipino diet, as the conversion of land to cash crops forced the population to rely on imported and milled rice, which lacked the vitamin-bearing husks that prevented beriberi, a vitamin B1 deficiency disease.The new campaign to resettle to new lands and establish plantations resulted in the spread of the population; later on, the economic profits to the colony also allowed for the increase in population. Before the nineteenth century, settlements were sedentary; now, it became a frenzy of movement in all directions. The booming economy also attracted the migration of the Chinese, and the move from Amoy (Xiamen), Hong Kong to Manila surged, resulting in the increase of Chinese population into the late nineteenth century.With these developments, transport gradually increased, and the appearance of the steamship in the mid-1800s revolutionized the distribution of goods, and with it, the faster contact with internal and external sources of infections. Toward the end of the nineteenth century and as the Philippine Revolution set in the Philippines had been affected by every pandemic outbreak in the last hundred years, with an almost decadal regularity. One of the ways to contain the spread of diseases was through quarantine, a practice of movement restriction, which Spain introduced to the Philippines, to no avail.

At the end of the century, the Philippines was going through a period of social unrest as successive wars, first against Spain and second against the United States, were fought.These events caused further movement of people, as Spain sent more than 25,000 soldiers to the Philippines, and even more U.S. soldiers in the following years, around 122,000 between 1899 and 1902. With them were diseases from foreign sources. U.S. soldiers brought with them diseases from North America and where they were previously stationed, such as Cuba, Hawaii, and China. They contracted diseases upon arrival in the Philippines, which they transported and distributed throughout the islands. As the Filipinos turned to guerrilla warfare in the fight against the United States, the U.S. Army responded with the garrison strategy, posting groups of 25 or more soldiers in more than 500 towns in the country. Here, the soldiers mingled with the local population, and some engaged with prostitutes. While the United States prided itself with the campaign for sanitation practices, there was little evidence that these were effective in the garrisons, and units dumped their excrement in a nearby river where locals regularly bathed and sourced drinking water. As rivers rush to the sea, waste collected in the beaches,where flies gather and become the carriers of microbes and pathogens to the nearby settlements. These practices only worsened the already inadequate waste disposal in the country.

One of the pandemics that affected the Philippines was cholera. As it infected the world in the periods of the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, it also reached Philippine shores and became endemic, or regularly found among Filipinos. Cholera is an infectious and often fatal bacterial disease typically contracted from infected water supplies and food and caused severe vomiting and diarrhea. The cholera outbreak in 1820,an offshoot of the Asiatic cholera pandemic of 1817 to 1823, erupted in September and observed along the Pasig River on October 4,1820. While mortality figures are not available, accounts reveal it was a severe epidemic, as witnesses tell stories of people with carts that carry the dead hurried through the streets of Manila day and night, and that a month later, there were not enough people left to tend the sick or bury the dead. Riots also erupted in Manila as rumors of foreigners contaminating the water to kill locals spread,and mobs attacked foreigners in Manila, Cavite, Tondo,and Binondo, and several Europeans and Chinese were killed.

Major cholera outbreaks, offshoots of the widespread Asiatic cholera epidemics, occurred in 1882 to 1883 and 1888 to 1889. The epidemic of 1882 began in Manila on August 20,1882 and caused havoc in the following months. At its peak, varying estimates of mortality were pegged at 1,300 people dying every day in Manila, totaling to about 15,000 to 20,000 according to the German consul stationed in the city. For days, dead bodies littered the streets around San Lazaro Hospital,and corpses blocked the entrance to cemeteries, forcing the government to organize mass burials. Cholera also spread to surrounding provinces in 1883. The epidemic of 1888 would have been as massive if not for the construction of a water project in Manila, which sourced water from the Marikina River. It has been argued that many of the early cases were deliberately misdiagnosed to avoid public panic and allow the government to introduce measures to curb the problem and deal with the situation. Another severe cholera outbreak occurred in 1902, which was believed to have come from China, where infected human waste was used to fertilize vegetables, which were then transported to Manila. While the official death tally stood at 109,461 persons, eyewitnesses reported that more than 200,000 people died during the epidemic. The American commissioner ordered the quarantining of Manila's water supply source and established a cholera hospital, a morque to analyze the deceased suspected of cholera, and a crematorium. Filipinos resisted these anti-cholera measures, as cholera hospitals were deemed ineffective. The epidemic subsided in 1904, as the rainy season and typhoons flushed water sources.

The Americans introduced other measures to contain diseases, such as founding a leper colony in Culion, Palawan. In 1909, this colony was affected by an outbreak of beriberi. Earlier in 1901 and 1902, two beriberi epidemics also struck the Bilibid Prison in Manila. These epidemics were easily prevented and managed by changing the diets of the inmates to more bread and potatoes and the introduction of unpolished rice in the leper colony. The Americans proved more effective than the Spaniards in managing diseases in their territories, as evidenced by the smallpox epidemic from 1918 to 1919. The interventions introduced by the United States in the Philippines resulted in the eradication of endemic smallpox by 1930,the first place in Asia to achieve such a goal.

An offshoot of the devastating worldwide Spanish Influenza pandemic resulted in an influenza pandemic in the Philippines from 1918 to 1919, which occurred in two waves. The first wave was mild and lasted only from May to June 1918. At first, it was dismissed that the disease was just the usual Filipino trancazo. However, the second wave proved more lethal, resulting in 36,884 deaths in November and 26,652 deaths in December. Overall, it was estimated that total mortality in Luzon alone was near to a hundred thousand people.

During World War Il, epidemic diseases of poliomyelitis and schistosomiasis also struck the U.S. troops in Leyte. Polio is an infectious disease caused by the poliovirus, and it was found that the Americans contracted the virus from the local population, where it was transmitting endemically without showing signs Schistosomiasis, a disease caused by a parasitic worm, was also endemic in Leyte. It was contracted through contact with water, where the worm penetrates the skin. As the source of the disease was identified, soldiers were moved to safer locations, and those infected were given the appropriate treatment.

In the postwar years, the Philippine government also dealt with several epidemics, such as dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) in the 1950s and 1960s DHF was first identified in 1953 as separate from the classical form of dengue and was marked by fever, blood loss, and affected young children. The first massive outbreak occurred in the rainy season of 1956 in Manila. All reported cases occurred in children living in areas where the Aëdes aegypti mosquito was present. After this outbreak, DHF became entrenched in the Philippines. Up to this day, dengue is prevalent in the country, and hundreds die yearly. A cholera epidemic also happened from 1961 to 1962, an offshoot of the Asiatic cholera pandemic caused by the Vibrio el tor bacterium. At this point, the introduction of vaccines and the usual quarantine and sanitary measures hélped abate the epidemic, A total of 2,005 died due to the cholera epidemic from 1961 to 1962.

What was evident in the history of epidemic diseases in the Philippines is that mobility affected the probability of contact, but susceptibility, the likeability of being harmed, was determined by poverty, debilitation, and malnourishment. It could be said that basic poverty is an epidemic in itself, and central to the spread of diseases Poor people are marginalized,deprived of information, money, or access to health services, yet they are the most vulnerable to diseases. They do not have access to nutritious food, live in congested areas, do not have adequate waste disposals, and these could all mean the difference in the spread of epidemics. It is but logical that in the quest to end epidemic diseases, we must first look into solving the problem of poverty in the country.



The synthesis of these essays on various aspects of Philippine history—ranging from the roles of women, the evolution of the constitution and taxation, festivals, and the impact of diseases and epidemics—reveals a rich and multifaceted narrative that underscores the resilience, cultural richness, and adaptive governance of the Filipino people.

The Role of Women in Philippine History

Women in the Philippines have played crucial roles throughout history, from pre-colonial times to the present. In the pre-colonial era, women held significant positions in society as babaylans (priestesses) and were involved in decision-making and spiritual leadership. Spanish colonization, however, altered these roles, as the influence of Catholicism introduced patriarchal norms that restricted women's roles largely to the domestic sphere. Despite this, women continued to be influential in the socio-political landscape, particularly during the Philippine Revolution against Spanish rule and the struggle for independence. Female revolutionaries like Gabriela Silang and Melchora Aquino became symbols of resistance. In the modern era, the role of women has evolved further, with increasing participation in politics, education, and the workforce, reflecting the ongoing struggle for gender equality in the Philippines.

Evolution of the Constitution and Taxation

The evolution of the Philippine Constitution and taxation system reflects the country's complex journey towards sovereignty, democracy, and social justice. From the Malolos Constitution of 1899, which was the first republican constitution in Asia, to the 1935 Commonwealth Constitution and subsequent charters, the Philippines has continually adapted its legal framework to address the changing needs of its society. The 1987 Constitution, which emerged after the People Power Revolution, remains the cornerstone of Philippine democracy, emphasizing human rights, social justice, and the separation of powers.

Taxation, on the other hand, has evolved alongside the constitution, reflecting the needs of the state to fund public services and infrastructure while balancing economic development and social equity. Over time, the taxation system has undergone reforms to address issues of inefficiency, corruption, and inequity, with varying degrees of success. The ongoing challenge is to create a tax system that is fair, efficient, and capable of supporting the country's development goals.

Philippine Festivals

Philippine festivals, rooted in a blend of indigenous, Spanish, and religious traditions, are a vibrant expression of the country's cultural heritage. These festivals, such as the Sinulog, Ati-Atihan, and Pahiyas, celebrate historical events, patron saints, and agricultural cycles. They are not only significant cultural practices but also serve as a means of community bonding and economic activity through tourism. Despite modernization and the influences of globalization, these festivals have retained their traditional elements, showcasing the Filipinos' deep sense of community, faith, and cultural pride.

Diseases and Epidemics in the Philippines

The history of diseases and epidemics in the Philippines is marked by the intersection of geography, colonialism, and socio-economic conditions. In pre-colonial times, the dispersed and isolated nature of communities limited the spread of diseases. However, Spanish colonization and the subsequent integration of the Philippines into global trade networks introduced new diseases and exacerbated existing ones, leading to significant outbreaks of smallpox, cholera, and later, influenza and other epidemics.

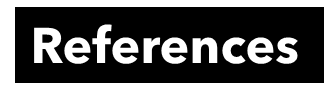
The management of these diseases has evolved over time, with varying degrees of success. During the American colonial period, more systematic public health measures were introduced, such as vaccination campaigns and the establishment of sanitary infrastructure. Yet, the persistent issues of poverty and inadequate access to healthcare have continued to make large segments of the population vulnerable to disease.

The Interconnectedness of Philippine History

The interconnectedness of these diverse aspects of Philippine history highlights the resilience and adaptability of the Filipino people in the face of challenges. The role of women in society, the evolution of the constitution and taxation, the celebration of festivals, and the response to diseases and epidemics all reflect the broader narrative of a nation that has continuously adapted to external influences while striving to maintain its cultural identity and social cohesion.

Women’s evolving roles mirror the broader shifts in societal structures and governance, while the constitution and taxation highlight the ongoing efforts to create a just and equitable society. Festivals serve as a reminder of the rich cultural heritage that binds the nation together, even as it faces modern challenges. Finally, the history of diseases and epidemics underscores the critical importance of public health and social equity in building a resilient society.

Together, these elements of history provide a comprehensive understanding of the Philippine experience, marked by both continuity and change. They emphasize the importance of addressing social inequalities, preserving cultural heritage, and building robust institutions to navigate the complexities of the modern world.



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**Unit 5**

Doing History

🖈 **INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*By the time the students finish the learning experience, they should be able to:*

* Distinguished the value of life, local and oral histories.
* Gathered Primary and Secondary evidence on local history.
* Appreciated the value of doing history to present day.



For most of us, studying history means looking back at the past at a grand scale:the rise and fall of civilizations, societal change and progress across time, and national or regional histories. However, we need to appreciate that history’s big picture is informed by individuals, communities, and locales that were shaped and are being shaped by the same historical forces. Thus, we must appreciate local history-the wealth of details about our towns, cities, and the political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that shaped them through tine, Local history allows us to move history closer to our own identities, and surely, there are exciting and surprising details about our communities waiting to be discovered.

Local history is a microcosm of national history-a representation of broad patterns in a much more localized scale. Spanish colonization gave birth to colonial cities and towns, yet we can see how local details informed this colonial order. The town of Los Baños in Laguna was named as such because of the numerous hot baños or baths, which was also connected to its old name, Mainit, and explains why even the water that comes out of the regular tap is warm. Nationally written history tells us about how World War Il affected the country,but it does not regularly tell us about local heroes that fought hard to defend their towns. Learning about local history makes national history more real and nearer to us, allowing us to understand our local town's identity better.

In the absence of written sources of the past, we turn to stories by those who came before us. The same stories have shaped the way our history has been told generations before us. Thus, oral history is a vital resource of national history, but more importantly, local history. Oral history rounds up the story of the past and captures details about the experience and perspective that the written record usually misses. It allows us to understand how historical events were experienced and how memory is being used by individuals and communities in the present day. It is mainly through oral history that the more minute details glossed over by national accounts come through and become more apparent.

This lesson focuses on these two essential variants of history-local and oral-and also provides you with a quick guide on how to conduct oral history interviews that could be valuable for conducting research. Every one of us has stories to tell-not one story is more important than the other-and thus, we must do our best to record our local and oral histories, lest these disappear and never come back.



* **Doing Local and Oral History**

***Local History***

The history subjects and courses usually taught to students in schools are Philippine history, world history, and the history of Asia. The coverage is always expansive and taught in broad strokes of historical periods, of large spaces,and of prominent personalities. Little is known about the subdiscipline of local history. Local history is the study of the history of a particular community or a smaller unit of geography. Debates, however, continuously persist on the definition of this subdiscipine, particularly in the subject of its study. Does local history study local communities? Local institutions?Local groups Local heroes? In recent studies, local history tends to cover all of these topics.Local historians study the history of local institutions like churches. They also consider the local economies, local heroes, and local events. Thus, local history is also a broad and dynamic field of inquiry that aims to have an in-depth understanding of a particular locale.

The most compelling question, however, is why study and do local history? In the first unit, we discussed how history could serve as a repository of collective memory. Such memory is essential in the forging of national unity through identification with a shared collective past. Nevertheless, nationalism, like 'other ideologies, when taken into extreme, can produce the most horrendous of human tragedies. The atrocities of World War ll that killed six million Jewish people in Europe were perpetrated by extreme nationalist rhetoric propagated by the Nazi Germany. Totalitarian states at present, like North Korea, also use nationalism in justifying the dictatorial and antidemocratic character of the country. In these cases of extreme nationalism, history is being used by states in forms of official national history to rally the people behind them. Local history can serve as a balancer of these tendencies by showing the peculiarities in specific locales in a particular nation, region, or continent. Studying local history can provide new and alternative interpretations of the different aspects of a nation's history. Local history also facilitates a historical narrative emanating from the people.

Local history is also a history from below. Ultimately, studying local history shall provide new provisions and perspectives on the already established national history.What used to be a generalizing narrative of the nation would start to recognize specific nuances and uniqueness in the experience of people coming from different localities in the country. Thus, local history is not just aimed at opposing the discourse in the national histories, but is also a tool of enriching these national narratives.

Doing local history, however, is not an easy task. Despite the seemingly smaller scope of study, historians are often faced with challenges in locating sources of local and specific objects of study. For example, it is much easier to study the life of national heroes than that of a local hero. Sources abound on subjects of national importance but tend to be scarce on local topics. Nevertheless, this limitation should encourage historians to innovate and recreate local historical methodology. One crucial historical method to local history is oral history.

In writing local history, one must remember that each has biases that need to be tempered because writing about the self, one's community, or locality where one belongs to can sometimes lead to a positive, sanitized narrative. Historians have had training on the rudiments of writing professional local history, but students may also attempt to write about a particular concept or practice in their locality that they may find interesting. The following are general reminders when researching local history:

*Professionalism*. A researcher on local history should be ready to persevere alone in a topic that has scarce sources, and yet prepared to work amicably and humbly with new acquaintances, more likely the local experts who may be more familiar with the topic.

*Canons of research*. The researcher should first comb through all written materials on a local history topic before going to the field. In the field, all new sources should be properly recorded, attributed, documented, and archived from the beginning until after the research.

*Local history* *is multifaceted*. Local history is not bound by geographical location alone; rather, the key concepts revolve around people. Researchers of a particular social phenomenon such as wedding customs may need to also refer to narratives of neighboring localities to establish connections of those communities better and determine unique characteristics of the phenomenon in that specific locality.

*Fairness and open-mindedness*. One should include all the new sources and information found, whether one likes or dislikes them. This new information should be placed in their proper context rather than judged. What is crucial in local history and what makes a good local historian is seeing, distinguishing, and balancing between the general pattern and the unusualness of the subject matter of local history.

Local history is important because it highlights the inclusion of all perspectives from actors and witnesses of people in history; it makes history closer and more relatable to the public, As American historian Michel Kammen said,"The past belongs to us all.. Local history is, of course, the most accessible of all history, for it is closest to home."

***Oral History***

The term oral history, as attached to interviewing, was first noted in the 1940s by Joseph Gould when he went around Greenwich Village in New York to write An Oral History of Our Time. He wanted to record what ordinary people had to say asa part of history. It was a shift from the monarchy or ruler-centered prior histories that used written and official sources. Later on, Allan Nevins and Louis Starr cemented oral history as a subfield of historiography. By the 1960s, it started to spread around the world, leading to the 1987 International Oral History Association.

Oral history is essential amid a scarcity in written sources, historical documents and other material evidence. This method uses oral accounts of historical subjects. witnesses, members of the communities,and the like. Oral history primarily relies on memory. The informant will recount their experiences to the researcher as they remember it. In other instances, the informant will relay what they learned from their ancestors or older members of the community to the historian. This nature and definition of oral history caused positivist historians or those who subscribe to the belief that history should be primarily based on written documents to criticize the methods of oral history. Memory is seen as something faulty and inaccurate. British historian A.J.P. Taylor even dismissed oral history as "old men drooling about their youth." At best, positivist historians see oral accounts as a mere supplement to the history written from written documents. But, leading oral history expert Donald A. Ritchie posed important questions regarding oral history:

*Who is being interviewed?* In the early decades of conducting oral history, despite a shift from looking to royalty to other social classes, the interviewees who were chosen were visible actors and eyewitnesses in society, like elected politicians, business executives, judges, publishers, and civic leaders. It was in Europe that some were able to tap the working class to share their experiences as a form of radical and democratic paradigm shifts by nonprofessional historians to "recover the voice" of ordinary people. In 1973, U.S. historian Staughton Lynd saw a colleague interviewing just-released civil rights activists, and from there began the project *Rank and File: Personal Histories by Working-class Organizers*. Historians began writing "from the bottom up." As more and more historians engaged in oral history alongside continually developing technologies, it became clear that oral history is all-inclusive and that the past is best understood by recording as many diverse interviewees or members of a community as possible. Oral history is to include all, especially those who were previously excluded. It is hardly used to write an already written and official narrative. For a specific example, oral history is not applicable in writing about a former president, who is already privileged and whose biographies abound; instead, one is encouraged to interview collective groups of ordinary people who were silenced,or those from the opposition for a more extensive and inclusive narrative.

*How reliable is the information gathered by oral history?* Interviews in oral history should be treated similarly to other historical sources: through source criticism. Sources and their interpretation should be corroborated against each other to ascertain validity and authenticity. Archival documents are thought to be better than interviews because the former does not change over time as people sometimes edit ormodify their stories. But, both have limitations. Documents may also be inaccurate, such as official numbers of human rights violations during Martial Law or official documents enumerating an administration's performance in numerical values. Conversely, interview data may change through time and depend on the interviewee's motives and memory. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the trained interviewer to raise intelligent questions and examine further dubious information that the interviewee may say.

*Does the fallibility of human memory limit oral history?* In the 2000s to 2010s, there was a heightened encouragement to write about the Japanese Occupation in the Philippines, not mainly because of the researcher's interest, but because the veterans of that era were already hitting their eighties and nineties. A whole generation of a possible wealth of historical sources was fading. In the interviews with them, there were probably those with sharp memories and those who were not as lucid. It is through corroboration that narratives can be assembled and balanced. It must be remembered that memory can be both explanatory and deceiving. It is the interviewer's art of questioning and scrutiny of details that can establish the common truths from fallible memories.

*What does it take to become a local historian?* Oral history has always been multidisciplinary; a degree in history is not needed but is a tremendous advantage. For example, established historians studying a particular field using archival documents may make poor interviewers of oral history. Conversely, sometimes those who are non-historians but are part of the community of a subject matter in oral history make better interviewers if trained properly in conducting oral history. Some works include law students who interviewed judges, a doctor who interviewed elderly patients in a fishing community rapidly disappearing in Japan, or women coal miners who interviewed other women coal miners from a different community These non-historians were able to do so based on their similarity in the profession or rapport that they had with the people they interviewed.

One cannot discount the importance of oral history in writing the history of underprivileged sectors and communities, like the urban poor or indigenous peoples. These groups are usually left out on records. They were undocumented because of their status. In these instances, it is the task of the historian to search for alternative methods that will capture the experience and collective pasts of these communities. Oral history plays this role

***Interviewing as a Method***

Interviewing is an essential method in the historian's toolkit. It is especially useful in researching life, local, and oral histories. However, interviewing is not as simple as sitting down with an interviewee and recording. Some steps should be taken to ensure that you are doing it correctly and making the most out of the experience. In this section, we discuss several guidelines so that your interview could yield the best resources for your research

*Preparing for the interview.* When you have decided about your research topic and identified who you will interview, it is important to have background information about your topic and your interviewee or respondent. The more you know, the better the interview will be. For example, if you are asking a person who witnessed the EDSA Revolution, it would be best to be familiar with the chronology of events relevant to those your respondent saw. If you are interviewing a person about their life history it would be best to know their background information in advance. Finding out the bigger picture enables you to craft proper questions and avoid those that could make your respondent hesitant to discuss.

Write your interview questions in advance. Respondents would sometimes request a list of questions before the interview so they could also prepare, so better be ready when such a request is made. If you were interviewing a person related to a historical event, it would be best also to have a chronological outline of relevant historical events, so that you could structure the interview and have cues at the ready. These cues based on chronology will be helpful when your respondent drifts into random reminiscences; you can always clarify where in your timeline does their memory fit.

Prepare the equipment and documentation that you will need. Today's smartphones usually come with voice recorders. You will also need consent and release forms, templates of which are available on the Internet. These are forms that prove you have conducted the interview, your respondent consented to the interview,and that they agree to be recorded. A release form is necessary if you intend to publish portions of the interview or post them online. Remember that the story you will get from your respondent is theirs, even after you conduct the interview. It is legally and ethically necessary that you secure a release permit before you publish your interview in whatever way.

Make sure that the interview will be done in a quiet and safe space. If you were interviewing several respondents, insist on doing it one at a time, if possible, so that the information you get will not be affected by the agreed-upon version of reality between multiple individuals, Identify a location that is quiet and safe for you and vour respondent. Inform your respondent in advance and verify with them two days before the interview, so that you are sure that they remember, and they will appear.

With today's technology, it is also possible to do an online interview through the Internet. This interview may be done through video or audio calls. The same preparation applies to this situation. If you can, insist (and if your respondent allows) to have the interview with video, since it is easier to understand and it is more natural if you see the nonverbal cues of your respondent.

*Interviewing techniques*. Remember that the interview is about the respondent, and not about you as the interviewer. The respondent must do most of the talking, and only occasionally guide them in the direction you deem most productive for your research. As much as possible, try not to interrupt nor break the concentration of your respondent as they talk. Always let them finish, and only ask your next question when they have stopped talking. Make sure to appear interested and show this interest through nonverbal cues, such as nodding. Signals like this indicate to the respondent that they are being listened to, and that you are taking an interest in the information that you are receiving. Verbal encouragement could also be helpful, such as "That is wonderful information!" or "How interesting!" Just be sure to be genuinely interested and allow them to finish before saying anything.

Although you have a list of questions, do not be afraid to ask follow-up questions based on what your respondent shared. Build on what they say and clarify specific parts if there were things that were unclear to you.

While yes-or-no questions are essential in identifying facts, vary your line of questioning and remember that you are not just after facts, you are also after experiences. You can begin a new topic by starting with "can you describe..." or "please tell me about..." which could stimulate the memory from your respondent and allow them to narrate freely instead of just answering your questions. When introducing a new topic, try to start with the more general, bigger questions, then get as specific as you want as you move along.

Be prepared to hear experiences that might be disturbing. If you are talking to someone about their experiences, say a war veteran who survived war prison or brutal interrogation, prepare to hear some gruesome details. Another example would be when interviewing someone who experienced a tragedy, such 'as survivors of a disaster. If they start being emotional, let them, and assure them that it would be fine if they need to stop the interview. If there is anything that your respondent is not willing to talk about,do not demand to know and respect their choice to be private.

Be mindful of the cues that your respondent is giving regarding the length of the interview. One to two hours is fine, but anything longer might be too tiring for them already. Often, a single sitting is not enough to get all the information you need,so you can ask for another schedule if you feel there is a need for it.

*After the interview.* Not long after you finish the interview, take the time to sit down, focus, and make notes based on the interview. Organize your thoughts and impressions. Note anything that could be useful for you later on, things that might be relevant that you could easily forget. This information could be helpful for your next interview or a follow-up interview.

Make sure your recording is complete and audible. While it is a great practice to transcribe interviews in full, it is not easy;depending on how you will use your interview, identifying snippets from the interview might be a more productive use of time. Listen to the recording as soon as you can,so that you still remember what you talked about, and the material is still familiar to you.

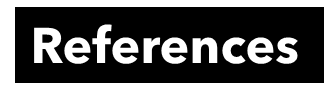
Finally, remember that the information you get from the interview is the respondent's memories and experiences. It may be as accurate as they remember the past, but it could also be clouded by their capacity to remember and their agenda. Be critical of whatever information you receive, and do not just accept them as historical facts. Historians refer to several sources of history before they interpret past events; you should also employ the same healthy amount of critical thinking when you analyze your interview.



Local history is the study of the history of specific communities, institutions, or regions. Unlike broad national histories, it focuses on the unique experiences, events, and figures within a smaller geographical area. This field enriches national narratives by offering alternative perspectives and highlighting the diversity within a nation. However, local history faces challenges, particularly the scarcity of sources, making research more difficult. Researchers must adopt innovative methods and maintain professionalism, fairness, and open-mindedness in their work.

Oral history is a method of historical research that involves collecting and recording personal accounts from individuals who experienced past events. This approach is essential in cases where written records are limited or nonexistent. Oral history captures the voices of ordinary people, providing a more inclusive and democratic view of history. While memory can be fallible, careful source criticism and cross-referencing help ensure the reliability of oral accounts. Conducting oral history requires thorough preparation, ethical considerations, and a focus on the respondent's experiences.

Local and oral histories are complementary approaches that contribute to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the past. Local history offers insights into the unique experiences of specific communities, challenging and enriching broader national narratives. Oral history, as a crucial method within this field, captures personal memories and voices often excluded from official records. Together, they emphasize the importance of diverse perspectives in history, making it more accessible, relatable, and inclusive. Both approaches require careful and ethical research practices, ensuring that the histories of all people, not just the prominent, are preserved and understood.



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