

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

IN BETWEEN MARGINALIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION:
WEIGHING THE CONDITIONS OF POSSIBILITY AMONG THE AETAS OF
MABALACAT CITY, PAMPANGA IN THE GLOBALIZING
CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The global neoliberal consensus for a market economy deepened the social inequalities among indigenous cultural communities. In the Philippine context, the overlapping policy regimes of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) and Bases Conversion and Development Act (BCDA) has led to conflict of laws and confusion of authority in managing ancestral domains within Philippine economic zones. In response, the study investigates the case of the Aeta communities in the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) by identifying their social, political and economic issues and corresponding responses to the globalizing development of Clark. The study also projects the development and other governance issues involving BCDA's forthcoming megaproject known as the "green, intelligent and global" Clark Green City. Although the gray areas of the IPRA and BCDA laws challenged the rights of the indigenous tribes to ancestral domains, cultural integrity and diversity, the research validates the possibility of coexistence between the neoliberal market economy of freeport zones and the indigenous social practices of the Aetas through the Joint Management Agreement (JMA). Through Critical Discourse Analysis, the study examines the different material, discursive and structural conditions of possibility among the Aetas of Mabalacat City, Pampanga to remain or go beyond the 'margins' of the globalizing Clark ecozone.