1   Introduction

Urban hubs beyond the megacities are considered catalysts for social diversity and economic progress. Korff (2013), in his article *Are there Cities in an Urban Society?*, places the centre of attention on medium-sized and small cities. Korff (2013) infers that, "While the global cities turn into agglomerations of communities, small cities become centres of urbanism of an urban society" (p. 10). He explicates the significance of medium-sized and small cities by pointing out that while megacities are considered centres and the former are peripheries, the latter are unprogressive for they constantly tend to dominate.

> Centres are always centres of orthodoxy and of domination. Not the least because any centres depends on external supply, which in turn requires ideologies of legitimation. Ignorance and arrogance get into it, because as a centre of the literati, of conventional cultivation, etc. many people regard themselves as superior to the country-bumping hillbillies at the peripheries. The peripheries are taken as irrelevant, because what is important is at the centre. However, history indicates that changes usually proceed from the peripheries. (Korff, 2013, p. 5)

According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (2015), urbanisation mainly unfolds in medium-sized and small cities rather than in the megacities of Asia and the Pacific. The urban transition of medium-sized cities like Cagayan de Oro (CDO) contributes to the "critical trend and dynamic in the region" (p. 12). By the same token, CDO was chosen at the 2014 World Urban Forum by UN-Habitat as one of the "emerging cities of tomorrow" (E. Escobar-San Juan, 2014, p. 2). CDO was the only city in the Philippines and the second ASEAN city recognised at the forum. Furthermore, CDO ranked 6th as most competitive city,[1] 2nd in terms

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[1] CDO qualifies under the Highly Urbanised City category. CDO meets the income and population qualification of a Highly Urbanised City that is certified by the National Statistics Office.

of government efficiency and 6th in infrastructures in the 2015 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (National Competitiveness Council Philippines, 2015).[2]

CDO has achieved significance and growth. However, like all the other peripheral urban hubs, CDO lacks the human and infrastructural means for urban development. As a matter of fact, its urban poor face the adverse effects of climate change. The city is confronted with the paradox between poverty and rapid urbanisation.

Forty-eight per cent or almost half of the Filipino population settles in the cities; of the 100.98 million Filipinos, 21.9 million live in poverty (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2016). In CDO, the poverty incidence, which indicates the number of individuals who live below the poverty threshold (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2014), is at 7.7 per cent. Albeit urban poverty, the city thrives with distinct approaches that are exemplified in the public spaces. The Habermasian concept of democratic yet critical method of public opinion along with social action applies to the bustling plazas of CDO for "public spaces are supposed to function as receptors designed to absorb and modulate the full range of expressions of the societies they serve, from celebratory events to difficult forms of questioning" (Wee, 2014, p. 190). Therefore, two crucial research questions will be scrutinised in this study:

1. Why and how does the everyday public life in the plazas or parks of CDO exhibit vibrancy?
2. How are the marginalised included in the public spaces of CDO despite the dynamics of transformative processes?

To examine the vibrancy of the plazas as well as interpret the dynamics of transformative processes, which lead to revitalisation

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[2]   The National Competitiveness Council is established under Presidential Executive Order No. 571 and Executive Order NO. 44. Since 2006, the task force aims to set the criteria for competitiveness of the provinces, cities and municipalities in the Philippines ("About NCC | National Competitiveness Council").

and inclusivity of the marginalised in the public spaces of CDO, I structure the study in the following outline. In the first chapter, I will present the state of art wherein various philosophies are synthesised. The theoretical underpinnings of both western and oriental social philosophers are then integrated throughout the succeeding chapters. The analytical framework is shown in three parts: (1) Variation of Spaces, (2) The Subject in Public Spaces, and (3) The Philippine Social Spaces. In the second chapter, I will provide the methodology, which includes data collection and analysis. In the third chapter, I will exhibit the urbanisation process of CDO along with the growth of its income, trade, industry, and financial and educational establishments. In the fourth chapter, I will show the creation of urban plans, which comprise the Framework Plan, Master Plan, Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and the most recent Planned City Extension, then the actual evolution of land use for a span of five decades since the charter of CDO. In the fifth chapter, I will focus on the examination of the three public spaces or tripartite spaces in CDO: namely, Divisoria, Gaston Park, and Vicente de Lara Park. In the sixth chapter, I will analyse the vibrancy and inclusivity of the tripartite spaces. This chapter highlights three distinct yet interrelated narratives: Typhoon Washi, the Night Café, and Alternatives to Illiteracy and Criminality. The narratives define the pressing conditions of the city that are reflected and occurring in the public spaces. In the last chapter, I will conclude by summarising the findings of the research. Finally, I will integrate the facts with insights from a sociological perspective.

1.1   Variation of Spaces

Architects, planners, and social scientists faced with the challenge of coming up with a framework for distinguishing the oriental public domain produced the book *Public Space in Urban Asia* (Lim, 2014). Public spaces in Asia, especially in Southeast Asian cities, are "intended to be open ended" (Wee, 2014, p. 190). They are frequently characterised as "pluralistic with visible chaotic disorder and an

incredible mixture of multi-use spaces" (Lim, 2014, p. 220) to the extent that the spheres "absorb the incongruent mix of people, often including marginal classes" (Wee, 2014, p. 192). Oriental urban centres manifest "genuinely robust public space" (Wee, 2014, p. 192). The phenomenon is attributed to the extreme rate of the region's urbanisation. Asia and the Pacific displayed a 2.7 per cent average annual rate of urbanisation from 2000 to 2010, higher than the 2.2 per cent global urbanisation rate (UN-Habitat & United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2015). In Southeast Asia, the rate of urbanisation grows at 2.8 per cent; correspondingly, 47 per cent or almost half of its population lives in cities (Department of Economic and Social Affairs & United Nations, 2014).

To further distinguish the Asian public space, Jacobs (2014) cites the hawker centre in Singapore, which "presents us with a number of hybrid spaces that are 'public' in ways not necessarily recognisable in Western cities" (p. 187); hawkers shape the food culture in Singapore. Likewise, in the cities of Vietnam scholars reinforce the differentiation between Western and non-Western public spaces (Drummond, 2000; Kurfürst, 2012). Kurfürst (2012) clarifies that the Western "public sphere as a sphere of political reasoning and will formation is difficult to apply to Vietnam, where the three sectors of state, economy, and civil society frequently overlap" (p. 11). The overlapping of systems nurtures that

> in Asian cities the market and the state are calibrated in distinct ways, resulting in novel combinations of the hyper-regulated and laissez-faire, the planned and the informal, the marketised and the collectively provided and consumed. Into this mix come other interests that subvert and innovate across such binaries. This is why to speak in categorical terms about public space is not always useful in an Asian context, where there can be both mutability and transience. (Jacobs, 2014, p. 189)

As the authors outline the uniqueness of open spaces in urban Asia, the references to Western tradition prevail. There is not an absolute break from the influences of prominent thinkers. In fact, the authors draw from the works of Habermas, Sennett, and Lefebvre, among others.

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Jürgen Habermas (1992) traces the evolution of the public sphere from its inception, transformation, and gradual decline. Originally coined as *agora* in the city-states of ancient Greece, the public sphere accorded *bios politikos* or public life to citizens who participated in discourses. Overtime, the public sphere acquired changes particularly in the 18th to 19th century Europe. Habermas singles-out the role of the bourgeoisie or private individuals who achieved certain financial and educational status. The bourgeoisie constituted the middle class, which formulated mass consent from the data of print media i.e. newspapers, magazines, and books. Habermas then brings forth the critical point where the introduction of industrial capitalism interrupted the essence of public sphere since the flow of communication homogenised public opinion. Publicity brought by print media intertwined with public relations. Habermas (1992) identifies that, "Public relations do not genuinely concern public opinion but opinion in the sense of reputation. The public sphere becomes the court *before* whose public prestige can be displayed—rather than *in* which public critical debate is carried on" (pp. 200-201). The deliberate decline of individual critical thinking because of mass consumption resulted in diminishment of authentic public participation. Habermas (1992) critiques, "The public sphere in the world of letters was replaced by the pseudo-public or sham-private world of culture consumption" (p. 160).

Richard Sennett continues in his book *The Fall of Public Man* (1992) the argument where Habermas had left off. The historical-sociological interpretation of Habermas was augmented with a socio-psychological account of public life. Sennett maintains the theme of desolation to describe the present state of the public sphere. The most compelling evidence of decadence of *res publica* is reflected in the empty spaces of the city.

> A *res publica* stands in general for those bonds of association and mutual commitment, which exist between people who are not joined together by ties of family or intimate association; it is the bond of a crowd, of a "people," of a polity, rather than the bonds of family or friends. As in

> Roman times, participation in the *res publica* today is most often a matter of going along, and the forums for this public life, like the city, are in a state of decay. (Sennett, 1992, pp. 3-4)

Sennett attributes the causes of decay to the privatisation of social manners along with desolate urban designs. The effect of psychological privatisation is the deprivation of public participation. Sennett (1992) explains that this is related to the effect of increasing the privatisation of psyche. He argues that "the more privatised the psyche, the less it is stimulated, and the more difficult it is for us to feel or to express feeling" (p. 4). Private and public lives used to be strongly connected; however, public life in the post-modern period is not seen to be as important as private life. For the most part, public space does not make sense to the citizens. The evolution of social manners from being intimate and warm to being distant and cold ensued social withdrawal.

> Dead public space is one reason, the most concrete one, that people will seek out on intimate terrain what is denied them on more alien ground. Isolation in the midst of public visibility and overemphasis on psychological transactions complement each other. To the extent, for instance, that a person feels he must protect himself from the surveillance of others in the public realm by silent isolation, he compensates by baring himself to those with whom he wants to make contact. The complementary relation exists because here are two expressions of a single, general transformation of social relations. I have sometimes thought about this complementary situation in terms of the masks of self which manners and the rituals of politeness create. These masks have ceased to matter in impersonal situations or seem to be the property only of snobs; in closer relationships, they appear to get in the way of knowing someone else. (Sennett, 1992, p. 15)

Sennett agrees with Habermas on blaming the ill-effects on industrial capitalism. Impersonality intensified in overcrowded urban spaces as shown in 18th century Paris where "the city continued to fill up with people, these people increasingly lost functional contact with each other outside. There were more strangers and they were more isolated. The problem of the square was magnified to the problem of *quartier* and neighbourhood" (Sennett, 1992, p. 135). To add more com-

plication, rapid urbanisation encouraged massive urban plans. Public spaces were designed for the crowd, yet, remained inefficacious for the reason that the "urbanist conceives of community against the city" (Sennett, 1992, p. 294).

The advent of capitalism marked the mystification of material consumption. The great mass of urban consumers spent astronomical shopping appetite from the confines of their homes or intimate sphere where obsession of material acquisition took place up to the commercial outlets in the public spaces of the urban centres. The power of marketing subconsciously stimulates public behaviour. Mystification of goods encourages consumers to feel and act expressive of one's individuality in the public realm but only in subtle manner. The preoccupation of goods makes the individual care less for the others who need social attention. The narrow goal is to be a consumer not to be a giver. Given these points, Sennett (1992) comments that "the world of retail commerce indicates the terms of the most basic of these puzzles, the effects and the limits of capitalism on public life, in terms of mystification and in terms of privatisation" (p. 149). In short, Sennett is unmistakably contemplating the lessons of public morality.

The preceding reviews deal with the distinction between Western and non-Western spaces as well as delineations between private and public lives. The proceeding examination sustains comprehension of public sphere dynamism in Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991) which is fundamental in sociological discourses. Without Lefebvre's contribution, much would be lacking in the corpus of social studies. Lefebvre transcends our understanding of space. An ordinary individual may appreciate an open space in the urban centre as it is—a plot made up of material foundations without bearing. In contrast, Lefebvre interprets the connotations of spaces—its implications, histories (excluding chronologies), and relevance to everyday life.

Space endures through history. It collects memories. It is a repository of ancient endeavours. It harbours recollections of events that impact the locality, the nation, and the world. Space, nonetheless, is

no passé because it serves as a continuum of past and present configurations (Lefebvre, 1991; Mumford, 1961).

Public space is integral in urban designs. It is the outcome of the architectural output. Spatial activities resemble social articulations—entertainment or arts, economic, and political ventures. Lefebvre encapsulates the variants into a whole new perspective. To begin with, the congruence between abstract and concrete spaces is stressed.

> What is called for, therefore, is a thoroughgoing exposition of these concepts, and of their relations, on the one hand with the extreme formal abstraction of logico-mathematical space, and on the other hand with the practico-sensory realm of social space. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 15)

The reconciliation of both abstract and concrete spaces leads to the conclusion that "(social) space is a (social) product" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 30). In essence,

> the concept of the *production of space*, posits a theory that understands *space* as fundamentally bound up with social reality. It follows that space 'in itself' can never serve as an epistemological starting position. Space does not exist 'in itself'; it is produced. (Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom, & Schmid, 2008, p. 28)

The production of space results in a synthesis of the spatial concepts

> consisting of three elements: representations of space, or "conceived space," which for my purposes includes not only the drawings and images produced by the designer but the material manifestations of those designs in the built environment (i.e., urban form); representational space, "lived space" or the symbolic values produced by the inhabitants; and spatial practice, "perceived space" or the ways in which spaces are used. These elements are not independent and it is the interaction between them that results in the production of space. (Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom, & Schmid, 2008, p. 269)

Lefebvre's concept of production of space is anchored in this thesis. The spatial triad will be constantly referenced to elucidate the interdependencies of vibrant spaces. The following literature relates to the conceptual triad.

Umberto Eco's *Function and Sign: Semiotics of Architecture* (2005) exemplifies conceived space "by planners, architects, and other specialists who divide space into separate elements that can be recombined at will" (Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom, & Schmid, 2008, p. 137). Eco (2005) illustrates how architecture possesses the ability to communicate by appropriating the theory of semiotics with the objective "to interpret functions as having something to do with communication" (p. 174). Architecture is classified into two functions—denotative and connotative. The former refers to the functional purpose while the latter relates to the symbolic insinuations. By combining both functions,

> Significative forms, codes worked out on the strength of inferences from usages and proposed as structural models of given communicative relations, denotative and connotative meanings attached to the sign vehicles on the basis of the codes—this is the semiotic universe in which a reading of architecture as communication becomes viable, a universe in which verification through observable physical behaviour and actual objects (whether denotata or referents) would be simply irrelevant and in which the only concrete objects of any relevance are the architectural objects as significative forms. (Eco, 2005, p. 176)

Eco (2005) remarks on the driving force of architecture to shape civilisation "through the operation of its system of stimulative sign-vehicles to determine what those functions and values are going to be—restricting men to a particular way of life dictating laws to events" (p. 191). In brief, the role of the architects particularly the urban designers "should be designing for variable primary functions and open secondary functions" (Eco, 2005, p. 191); notwithstanding the fact that "architecture is a business" (Eco, 2005, p. 187). It can be possible for the architect to design a platform in public spaces for the marginalised if and only if he or she sees the origin of poverty. The architect can be a visionary and at the same time an agent of change.

Eco and Lefebvre adhere to the dimension of conceived space, albeit, the former emphasises the architect and architecture in the realm of cultural interpretation. The latter expounds on a broad

sphere of interpretation that goes beyond the semiotics of architecture. Lefebvre (1976) puts forward the argument that, "Space has been shaped and moulded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process" (p. 33).

Since space occupies roles in the city, there is a necessity to shed light on historical space. It cannot be denied that *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects* (1961) is momentous in the literature of urbanism. Lewis Mumford pursues answers to some fundamental questions about the city such as its definitions, origins, functions, and future missions.

The city has not one definition but many. Throughout the book, the city takes on a whole lot of different meanings depending on the progress it makes in history. The city's origins, functions, purposes, and prospects are what define it. Originally, the city was the sanctuary, village, and stronghold. Man's first religious activities began in the sanctuaries and shrines of the cave. It soon became apparent that man had to move out and settle in a large expanse of field, for which the village provided. Since then "the order and stability of the village, along with its maternal enclosure and intimacy and its oneness with the forces of nature, were carried over into the city" (Mumford, 1961, p. 15).

In the village, Mumford emphasises the role of the woman. Her touch, maternal instincts of love and care prevailed in every aspect of domestic life. It was in the individual homes where the "woman's needs, woman's solicitudes, woman's intimacy with the processes of growth, woman's capacity for tenderness and love, must have played a dominating part" (Mumford, 1961, p. 12).

History shows that the role of man overpowered the role of the woman after the union of the Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultures. This merging signalled the beginning of a societal paradigm where man took over a new position as a leader. His role in the village as a "hunter" was replaced and elevated into a protector and king of the people.

The function of the ancient city "gathered scattered organs of the common life, and within its walls promoted their interaction

and fusion" (Mumford, 1961, p. 568). In other words, it was the place for organisation. Dynamic human activities abounded because the city propelled communication among the inhabitants. Thus, it was the centre of collaboration and transformation. To "draw untapped human aspirations by unifying them in a central political and religious nucleus" (Mumford, 1961, p. 568) was the vision for the city dwellers. It was the core of religion and government.

Interestingly, Mumford and Lefebvre share parallelisms. Both locate the evolution of the city. Using Lefebvre's terms, space is a product of history. The historical space sheds light on the metamorphosis of natural landscape into absolute space.

> Architecture picked a site in nature and transferred it to the political realm by means of a symbolic mediation; one thinks, for example, of the statues of local gods or goddesses in Greek temples, or of the Shintoist's sanctuary, empty or else containing nothing but a mirror. A sanctified inwardness set itself up in opposition to the outwardness in nature, yet at the same time it echoed and restored that outwardness. The absolute space where rites and ceremonies were performed retained a number of aspects of nature, albeit in a form modified by ceremonial requirements: age, sex, genitality (fertility)—all still had part to play. At once civil and religious, absolute space thus preserved and incorporated bloodlines, family, unmediated relationships—but it transposed them to the city, to the political state founded on the towns. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 48)

The aims of the city are several. Highest of these is the unification of humankind. In order to achieve unity, the city must strive to "put the highest concerns of man at the centre of all his activities" (Mumford, 1961, p. 573). The city's role in the future must be to unify man's inner and outer world. Another prospect for the urban world is to be the nucleus of love, not the hub for either economic or political leadership for the heart of its mission is to turn the world around from hate, decay, and destruction to peace, unity, and love. The last but not the least among its intentions is to bring man to an understanding of himself, of the world around him, and of the past.

Despite the present intoxication prevailing in the city such as disunity, neglect, and damage, Mumford believes that the city will

survive and transpire to become worthier than its current state. His belief centres on the hope that

> significant improvements will come only through applying art and thought to the city's central human concerns, with a fresh dedication to the cosmic and ecological processes that enfold all being. We must restore to the city the maternal, life-nurturing functions, the autonomous activities, the symbiotic associations that have long been neglected and suppressed. For the city should be an organ of love; and the best economy of cities is the core and culture of men. (Mumford, 1961, p. 575)

Mumford might have been overly positive in his proposition; after all, his study has focused on western cities. Though early on, he apologises for its limitations and admitted, "I have confined myself as far as possible to cities and regions I am acquainted with at first hand, and to data in which I have long been immersed" (Mumford, 1961, p. xi). In like manner, Lefebvre acknowledges the differences between Western and Oriental concepts of space. He recognises the one-sided attention on the Western perspective. And thus questioned what the Oriental concept of spaces could be.

> How much can we really learn, for instance, confined as we are to Western conceptual tools, about the Asiatic mode of production, its space, its town, or the relationship it embodies between town and country—a relationship reputedly represented figuratively or ideographically by the Chinese characters? (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 31-32)

The biases of Mumford and Lefebvre obviously depict development of urban sites in Northern America and Western Europe. Now, this would lead us to question: What could have Mumford and Lefebvre proposed with respect to the cities in the developing world particularly in Southeast Asia? Would Mumford still believe so much for the cities to be transformed into "organs of love"?

There is a vast difference between the cities in the West and in Asia. In Southeast Asia, for example, there is rapid urbanisation wherein tremendous growths in population and industrialisation have been occurring since the last World War. Extreme urbanisation

leads to exhaustion of natural resources and degradation of society as poverty spreads all over from the countryside to the cities.

> Urbanisation is now a global process, into which developing countries are increasingly being drawn. In 1950, only 30 per cent of the world's population were urban dwellers; by 2000, this had reached 47 per cent - 2.9 billion people and by 2030 it is expected to reach 60 per cent - 5 billion people. At current rates of change, the number of people living in urban areas will overtake the number of people in rural areas by 2007. Most urbanisation is now taking place in the developing world. The urban population of the less developed regions is expected to rise by more than 2 billion people between 2000 and 2030 from around 2 to 4 billion. (Giddens, 2006, p. 906)

Less developed Southeast Asian nations like the Philippines and Indonesia face the challenges of the informal sector. Land, housing, water, sanitation, and protection against disasters are not adequately provided to the urban poor. UN-Habitat furnishes that in 2009 the Philippines kept 40.9 per cent or 18.3 million of urban poor in the informal sector; while Indonesia took in 23 per cent or 23.3 million of the informal sector (2015, p. 75).

The culture of cities resembles the rate of urbanisation. In other words, urbanism reflects the system of the city. The examples of the Philippines and Indonesia illustrate the challenge in the system—extreme rate of urban poverty. The subsequent analyses further shed light on the culture of the marginalised in Southeast Asian cities.

The study of Hans-Dieter Evers and Rüdiger Korff on *Southeast Asian Urbanism: The Power and Meaning of Social Space* (2000) scrutinises how cities achieve modernity in a dual process wherein slums alongside gated communities are accommodated. The urban poor who are discriminated in the social and spatial set-up survive by integrating themselves in the informal sector regardless of insufficient financial means. Evers and Korff emphasise how the marginalised deal with the struggles of living in cities where the complexities of urbanisation combined with globalisation and modernity lead to domination.

> The process of defining the meaning of the city and concretising this within the city depends on the ability of strategic groups to dominate society and to control access to the material and artistic resources required for concretising the meaning of the city. The urban constructions are concretisations of an urban ideology of élites. Thus changes in the configuration of élites often imply re-definitions of the meaning of the city and urban 're-construction' so that the new social and symbolic demands are satisfied. (Evers & Korff, 2000, p. 17)

The Southeast Asian city faces the challenge of re-inventing itself to prevail over domination of élites. Urban re-invention is part of transformative processes. The public space offers such venue of vibrancy, which leads to revitalisation.

> Through a range of actions and practices, public space can facilitate the collaboration among individuals, groups, and agencies to reinvigorate the city as a domain for public dialogue and debate. With consistent contestation and a favourable ideological climate of people-oriented openness, public space can serve as a vital tool for measuring the inclusive vibrant nature of our present contemporariness. (Lim, 2014, p. 24)

Inclusivity is equally important to vibrancy. The opportunity lies in the active participation of community members rather than the élites. Lim (2014) uncovers that, "How the city can be perceived is by the intensity of active participation of local urban citizens" (p. 22). Empowerment of the marginalised espouses that

> It is only via the responses and intentional occupation of a space that it can be made public. How successful the people-oriented and grassroots generated inclusive society in a city can be measured from the provision and usage of its public space. (Lim, 2014, p. 23)

On the whole, inclusivity coupled with active participation offers opportunities of transformation amidst the challenges in the urban hierarchical system. Public spaces in cities can be venues and symbols of hope. Marginalised citizens are included in the pursuit towards social justice.

1.2 The Subject in Public Spaces

The best way to respond to societal challenges is to concretise the idea of self-empowerment. Alain Touraine in the book *Can We Live Together?: Equality and Difference* (2000) calls the individual "the Subject". Change emanates from the Subject. Social transformation is created when the Subject immerses himself/herself in societal engagement. Therefore, "the Subject can be a defence against social reality" (Touraine, 2000, p. 56). The instance the Subject decides to act and take on the challenge of contributing ideas or projects to combat social inequality, rippling effects transpire.

> The Subject has no content but its own production. It serves no cause, no values and no law other than its need and desire to resist its own dismemberment in a changing world in which there is no order or equilibrium. (Touraine, 2000, p. 13)

Before the action takes place, the Subject must be cognisant of the opposing poles of isolation and globalisation. Touraine (2000) aptly frames, "The central conflict in our society is being waged, according to my analysis, by a Subject struggling against the triumph of the market and technologies, on the one hand, and communitarian authoritarianism powers, on the other" (p. 89). Isolation is the effect of authoritarian governance; globalisation is the cause of mass consumption brought by the neo-liberal markets and technologies of communication.

The Subject invokes an active role in the global society and local community. The Subject becomes the social actor by doing what needs to be done. The Subject does not crave for attention nor awards. There is neither flare nor drama for the Subject is not indebted to anyone. Conscience directs the purity of the Subject's action.

The Subject rushes to what is necessary. The Subject does not need to justify his/her actions because there is a lack of time to advertise (through commercial means) the point in serving the marginalised. The urgency compels the Subject.

The Subject's actions are innately decent. The Subject does not need to kneel down to solicit for blessing nor sponsorship from any religious congregation because the Subject knows what he/she possesses is the aim of every mortal. The Subject acts regardless of other's sex, religion, race, or colour. The Subject is ordinary. Yet, the seemingly insignificant gestures of social action are what define the Subject. Above all, the Subject strives to reconcile globalisation and isolation by highlighting the advantages of both opposing realities.

> The Subject is both post-religious and anti-religious, both rationalist and anti-rationalising. It rejects religion because it belongs to modernity; but it also rejects all forms of positivism, both sociological and juridical, because there is an unbridgeable gap between utility and value. The Subject does not stand midway between religious thought and a utilitarian or positivist belief in progress. It is not ambivalent, and it does not alternate between loving and rejecting first progress and then the religious vision. It is self-centred, which means that the two worlds in which it is situated must be reconciled to some extent, but it also actively struggles against both worlds. The Subject is neither an eternal being nor the humanity that [is] set free by progress. It is neither God nor man. (Touraine, 2000, p. 88)

The true spirit of democracy is realised when the Subject goes beyond the comfort zone— outside the confines of *intimsphäre* or intimate space. The moment the luxurious home or cosy room is abandoned either temporarily or permanently for the sake of social involvement, thenceforth it becomes a point of victory. On the outset, a new form of democracy "defined as the politics of the Subject, as the regime that grants the greatest possible number the greatest possible opportunity to succeed in individuating themselves, or in living as Subjects" (Touraine, 2000, p. 158) is made possible.

Living not as Subjects occurs when the comfort of private spheres is not left behind but instead shackled. If the Subject does not go out of the comfort zone, isolation is bred. An isolated community manifests excessive consumerism that is attached to mass culture. Touraine (2000) re-echoes Sennett in this statement: "Mass culture is penetrating private space and occupying more and more of it. It has the side-effect of strengthening the political and social desire

to defend a cultural identity, and the end result is a new communitarianism" (p. 4). The moment of withdrawal signals a wrong turn. Desolation causes disruption of the public sphere.

The Subject exercises the right to innovative democratic practices. This signals the Subject's choice to bridge the gaps in society. The new democratic innovation of the Subject identifies with Habermasian thought. Habermas promotes the German ideals of democracy. German citizens exercise freedom, justice, and above all open-mindedness. Democracy in Germany does not merely rest on paper (written in the constitution); democracy is practised.

> This 'procedural' democracy is not content with formal rules; it guarantees respect for personal and collective freedoms, organises the representation of interests, formalises public debate and institutionalises tolerance. This conception is related to the idea of constitutional patriotism, which has been put forward by Jürgen Habermas in Germany. (Touraine, 2000, p. 7)

The ideals of the German society coupled with the critical role of the Subject in the public realm claim democracy as

> the political form of the recomposition of the world. And the recomposition of the world is central to my argument, because I reject the dissociation of a globalised economy from fragmented cultural identities. Politics is the art of reconciling unity with diversity. (Touraine, 2000, p. 262)

The Subject volunteers without resorting to violence but only with ideas and programmes channelled through societal involvement. Touraine (2000) proposes a *"link between the idea of the Subject and the idea of a social movement"* (p. 77). The proposal allows the shift from abstract vision to concrete action. Therefore, the Subject involves in the public sphere to reconfigure the balance between unity and diversity as well as between communitarian and globalisation.

The Subject embraces the "recognition of the Other as Subject" (Touraine, 2000, p. 81). The Other is accepted with dignity and respect. Thereafter, the unison of the Subject and the Other in the public realm advances social movement. Lefebvre strengthens the

argument of Touraine. Lefebvre (1991) agrees that "interested 'subjects,' as members of a particular society, would have acceded by this means at once to *their* space and to their status as 'subjects' acting within that space and (in the broadest sense of the word) comprehending it" (p. 17).

For the public space to be completely useful and relevant, the marginalised must be counted in. Wee (2014) addresses that, "Real public spaces ought to have the capacity to provide for the full extent of the public, in any given society, from the very wealthy to the wretched" (p. 193). Touraine (2000) supports the argument by emphasising, "today's revival of social action is taking place at the grass-roots level" (p. 301). Hence, the utility of public spaces is measured by its vibrancy that includes Subjects from all classes.

The core of perceived, lived, and conceived urban public spaces is the Subject. The city can be an *organ of love* the moment the Subject decides to take part in social movements. Once the Subject utilises the public sphere to instil social action, social space is ultimately produced. The Subject partaking in a democratic process is a step towards liberation from ignorance, corruption, ecological and human destruction, and above all from poverty. Thereafter, "subjectivation" which "begins with the rearticulation of instrumentality and identity" (Touraine, 2000, p. 158) takes precedence in the public space.
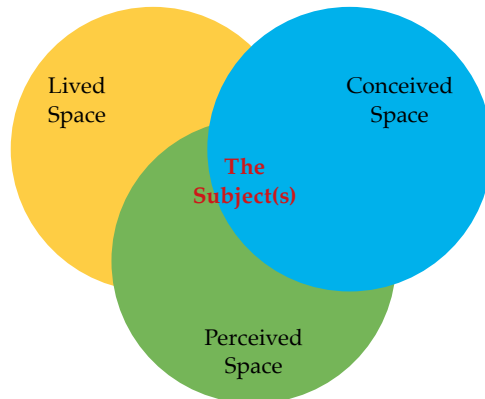

Figure 1. The Subject(s) within the Spatial Triad.

I propose the idea of reconciling Western discourses such as by Lefebvre, Sennett, Touraine, Mumford, and Habermas with the urban realities in the developing state of the Philippines. The synthesis of the frameworks brings out an innovative examination of urban studies. In the following chapter, the perspectives of architects, historians, and sociologists on the public spaces in the Philippines are exposed. Furthermore, it deals with reconfiguration of the historical interpretation of public spaces in the Philippines. I emphasise the original Filipino culture, which stems from aquatic traditions. The rest of the narrative points out vibrancy and fluidity of public spaces that reflect indigenous perception.

1.3 Philippine Social Spaces

The Philippines as part of maritime Southeast Asia begins with the historical narrative of thalassocracy. Ross (2019) defines thalassocracy as "the rule (krateîn, to rule) of the sea (thálassa, thálatta in Attic). This does not mean rule by the sea, as 'aristocracy' means the rule by the 'best', which wouldn't make much sense, but rule by those who control the sea". The "best" refers to the few who are the aristocrats. The management of the seas, however, is not possible with few rulers. Thus, not a few but anyone can take hold of aquatic space. Not to mention, the seas in the tropics can be navigated all throughout the year. The tropical climate offers abundance of maritime life. In other words, everyday life relies on the waters (Reid, 1990). Overwhelming evidences of vibrant pre-colonial aqua culture all over the archipelago endured among various ethnicities.

> Philippine culture and society emerged from maritime and riverine traditions. As a matter of fact, the names of many ethnic groups are derived from their association with water bodies, such as Tagalog (from taga-ilog, people of the river), Kapampangan (people of the coast), Tausug (people of the current), Meranao (people of the lake), Subanen (people of the river), and Iraya Mangyan (people of the upstream). The rivers, streams, lakes, and seas defined and shaped the cultural traits that developed among the people of these regions. (Castro, 2015, p. 10)

The bodies of water purvey transport and communication systems. Rivers, lakes, and seas facilitate trade among coastal and riverine communities. In like manner, the water communities expedite "hinterland trade, serving as centres for the exchange of upriver commodities such as forest products, obtained from interior tribal peoples, for imported and coastally produced pottery, cloth, and metal-ware" (King, 2008, p. 11). To summarise, aquatic spaces operate as commercial hubs for both maritime and hinterland populations.

The balangai was the primary means of transportation in the water bodies. It was the boat originally utilised by the chiefdom of Butuan in Surigao. The balangai as a tool for navigation proves the inherent cultural affiliation with aquatic space (Almeda, Jr., 1993; Castro, 2015). Employing the balangai, the chiefship of Butuan vigorously engaged in international maritime trading traditions. Almeda, Jr. (1993) reveals, "Inclusion of gold and pearls among the goods sold in such faraway places during those times by the seafaring merchants of the Philippines made the province of Surigao a likely participant in that Asian drama" (p. 37). The balangai is also the origin of the barangay, which is presently the smallest unit of Philippine government.

In the same fashion, the sultanate of Sulu dominated the pearl industry in the sea routes of Southeast Asia.

> Sulu in the south was another route taken by the Shri-Visayan hordes. Pearls caught the fancy of the lords of the new empire, and brought them to the south. Treasure hunters and pearl divers came to Sulu and when it became crowded, a situation that inevitably led to the displacement of the original settlers, the Shri-Visayans simply continued moving down the Pacific coast, ever on the lookout for sparkling pearls, until they reached Surigao. (Almeda, Jr., 1993, p. 38)

The chiefships of Sulu and Butuan possessed lush aquatic resources; albeit, "these mercantile states were neither centralised nor 'despotic.' They comprised a relatively footloose, ethnically heterogeneous population of merchants, small traders, and arti-

san" (King, 2008, p. 11). Wertheim (1980) rather identifies that the maritime states "generated a more cosmopolitan atmosphere and a greater receptivity to foreign cultural influences" (p. 11). In brief, Sulu and Butuan exemplify the practice of thalassocracy where the "rule by those who control the sea" signify the indigenous inhabitants rather than the "despotic" aristocracy.

The waters are likewise used for day-to-day bathing, fishing, drinking, and swimming. The everyday aquatic practices developed into cultural traits. The Boxer Codex explicitly depicts the lifestyle of the Visayans[3] in the 16th century.

> Their houses and towns are normally built on the banks of rivers and at the edges of swamps and marshes because this is considered optimal. Both men and women bathe publicly once or twice a day, their flesh being completely exposed, though they cover their privates with their hands until the water covers them. Hence they are all extremely able swimmers, men as well as women, because they have been taught this from birth. (Souza, 2016, p. 347)

The perception of modern urban public spaces as "uncertain and fluid" (Recio & Gomez, 2013, p. 176) links back to the intrinsic aquatic relationship. Space is fluid "which various transient players claim" (Recio & Gomez, 2013, p. 176). Space is traversed by anyone who wishes to not only trade but also communicate. In this sense, space "becomes a destination in itself" (Recio & Gomez, 2013, p. 176). Space is not land-based. Castro (2015) stresses, "Philippine culture is deeply anchored in water. Water helped build the diverse and unique Filipino culture" (p. 23).

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[3] The Moros of Luzon are similarly described in the Boxer Codex. Accordingly, "They also establish and settle their towns in swampy land and near water and rivers, the same as the Visayans, because it is their custom to bathe twice a day, just as the latter do" (Souza, 2016, p. 363).

Figure 2. The Chamarros welcomed the Manila Galleon.
Souza (2016) describes the Chamarros in the island of Ladrones (Marianas) as "most closely connected to other peoples of Austronesian origin who live to the west in the Philippines" (p. 304). The Chamarros are not different from the natives who navigate the bodies of waters in the islands of the Philippines. Their lifestyles depend on the fluidity of space. From Boxer Codex (1590). Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 2020.

Pre-colonial spatial practices are evident; however, Spanish impositions altered and eventually diminished the aquatic cultural traditions. Mata (2010) argues, "There is this biased perception that the Spanish conquistadores, the first Western urban colonisers, encountered a cultural void with no urban tradition. It was, in fact, colonial policy to disregard any existing cultural groups" (p. 41). The entry of foreign urban system resettled the inhabitants from fluid to permanent spaces. In contrast, fluid spaces are not confined unlike land-based urban sites. The looseness of aquatic culture was supplanted with "fixed urban centres" (Mata, 2010, p. 42). The Spanish urban designs laid out coordinated positions.

> 110. Having made the discovery, selected the province, county, and area that is to be settled, and the site in the location where the new town is to be built, and having taken possession of it, those placed in charge of its execution are to do it in the following manner. On arriving at the place where the new settlement is to be founded - which according to our will and disposition shall be one that is vacant and that can be occupied without doing harm to the Indians and natives or with their free consent - a plan for the site is to be made, dividing it into squares, streets, and building lots, using cord and ruler, beginning with the main square from which streets are to run to the gates and principal

roads and leaving sufficient open space so that even if the town grows, it can always spread in the same manner. Having thus agreed upon the site and place selected to be populated, a layout should be made in the following way. (The City Planning Ordinances of the Laws of the Indies, 1573)

Towns and cities became the new settlements. Its structural arrangement afforded ease of management from the perspective of the administrators. The grid pattern of streets stipulated fixed routes that led to the Catholic Church of which the primary goal was to eradicate pagan beliefs. The initial plan was to deter construction of settlements proximate to coasts and rivers; nonetheless, locations remained unchanged due to inaccessibility of elevated places. Subsequently, each town centre or población allocated proportion of open spaces or plazas. The design conformed to the plaza complex.

112. The main plaza is to be the starting point for the town; if the town is situated on the sea coast, it should be placed at the landing place of the port, but inland it should be at the centre of the town. The plaza should be square or rectangular, in which case it should have at least one and a half its width for length inasmuch as this shape is best for fiestas in which horses are used and for any other fiestas that should be held. (The City Planning Ordinances of the Laws of the Indies, 1573)

The plaza contained the town's crucial element—church. For the inhabitants, the church served as the locus of direction. All Catholic converts identified the church as central to their lifeworld. Hence, clerical ascendancy or otherwise referred to as theocracy replaced thalassocracy. The Laws of the Indies (1573) stipulated that the towns "should be populated by Indians and natives to whom we can preach the gospels since this is the principal objective for which we mandate that these discoveries and settlements be made". The clergy took over the state of daily affairs. That is to say, the clergy exerted management on the political, economic, and social concerns of the entire urban population.

The setup in the Philippines reflected the situation in Spain. In the colony, the Church was even more completely under the king's control

although, paradoxically enough, the clergy in the islands were more powerful than the king's official administrators because the latter were so few in number and because the friars played such an important role in the pacification campaign. (Constantino, 1998, p. 67)

The town hall, school, shops/marketplace, and residences of local elites were situated across the plaza. These prominent structures served as the primary layer of the población. The second layer comprised the ordinary residences, which were distributed within the urban territory. Therefore, both commoners and aristocrats gravitated towards the urban core.

The town centre as instigated by the church plaza complex transformed as a valid symbol and landmark for the town centre, and as a valuable tool for way-finding. The phenomenological as well as geographical reference of town identity further developed. Points of reference and sense of place would go hand in hand. (Mata, 2010, p. 44)

Everyday life revolved around the church from the display of public executions to the spectacles of sacred observances. The call of the church bells or music served as "tool for way-finding". The earshot sound invited churchgoers to participate in the daily Masses and myriads of religious events. The "sense of place" expressed the attachment to the church. Flores de Mayo, Santacruzan, Sinakulo, and Moro-moro gratified church festivities. Baptisms, weddings, funerals, and fiestas filled the cyclical celebrations. The yearly Holy Week procession was the essential of all events.

The procession, by definition, is a public and shared display of religious devotion instigated and established by Church authority. In it, the faithful, bearing aloft the religious image or sets of images, emerge from the church and, chanting prayers and devotional songs, wind their way around pre-designated streets and then return to the church. The ostensive objective of this ritual is the public display of devotion as both prayer and sacrifice. It is in the actual performance of the ritual however, together with the peripheral events of preparation and recessional, that the significance of the Diwa ng Lunan (Spirit of Place) is established. (Mata, 2010, p. 47)

The procession, together with all other displays of community rituals, evinces active participation. The fluid perception of spaces continues to prevail on land-based urban system despite the reduction of aquatic spaces to fixed urban centres. Streets and plazas then exemplify artificial fluid spaces. The festivities in urban spaces indicate continuum of traditional aquatic practices. Vibrancy continues to manifest on land-based spaces. Hence, impositions partially altered the pre-modern maritime norms. Fluid perception of spaces resurfaces even with artificial urban systems. Subconscious habits reappear even though public rituals are purely directed to the Church. Public participation denotes assimilation to external urbanism.

The process of assimilation goes on with the pacification by the Americans. Americanisation of urban spaces with modern infrastructures connotes continuity of imperial practices. Design and technologies are imported from America. As a result, implantation of imported systems resembles permanency of an artificial urban milieu.

> In the pursuit of colonial modernity and scientific progress, it was necessary to install and overlay the City Beautiful master plan with technological systems such as piped water, sewage, and electricity, transportation network and public infrastructure. These technologies were not merely a material element in the production of the urban image of a rapidly-advancing American imperial city, but also constituted a critical dimension to the social production of space, implying connectivities between the native body and the city, between the social and bio-physical systems, and between the invisible and visible aspects of the urban space. (Lico, 2009, p. 66)

Superficially, urban facilities appeared to render services for locals. Upon investigation, the infrastructures monopolised movements of commodities from America to the Philippines and vice versa. Sanitation, transportation, energy, and water systems offered means of economic flows. To point out, "urban incarnation of the imperial imagination became a commodity in itself facilitating colonial commerce and further accumulation of capital" (Lico, 2009, p. 66).

The urban strategy concurs with the singlehanded vision of Daniel Burnham. The concept of City Beautiful by Burnham was applied to Manila without public consultation in the planning process.

> Burnham recommended detailed urban procedures: the development of the waterfront and the location of parks, playfields and parkways so as to promote sufficient opportunities for urban recreation to every quarter in the city; the establishment of a street system which would establish direct and convenient communication from every part of the city to every other sector or district; the zoning of building sites for various functions; the development of waterways or esteros for transportation; and the provision of summer resorts within an accessible distance from the city. The space had a central civic core: radials emanating from this core were laid over a gridiron pattern and large parks interconnected by parkways. (Lico, 2009, p. 66)

Burnham epitomised Manila as the seat of American imperial power. He attributed grandeur, luxury, and vastness to the metropolitan image of Manila. Burnham never opted for uncomplicated and small-scale designs.

> The centrepiece of the Burnham Plan was the civic core where a grand concourse emanated from the bay and terminated in an arc further inland. Here, Burnham envisioned a national capitol complex where colonnaded buildings were formally arranged around a rectangular plaza. Radiating from this civic core was a series of tree-lined boulevards superimposed on an efficient gridiron street system. These radials divided the city into five sections and produced a street system that directed traffic efficiently up to a point where diagonals were introduced as a continuous connection between sections. (Lico, 2009, p. 66)

Grand edifices such as the national capitol complex connote a hierarchical system of governance. Morley (2010) interprets the stellar public symbols to which "the local communities could look physically and symbolically up to their governmental institutions, and likewise the civil servants could look out to the people whom they serve" (p. 241). The public edifices further reinforce "that architecture (and design, in its overall sense) is an act of communication, a

message, of which the parts or the whole can perform the double action of every communication, connotation, and denotation" (Eco, 2005, p. 194). The American urban scheme exemplifies

> hierarchised, continuous, and functional surveillance that was epito-mised by the ideal model of geometric architecture–the panopticon–and spatial form of normalising power. The panopticon paradigm in which built form was overtly linked to the inculcation of regulatory social norms and achievement of social reform was a colonial urban strategy aimed at creating obedient colonial subjects through knowl-edge of surveillance. (Lico, 2009, p. 62)

Open spaces occupy a significant part of the American urban design. Morley (2010) notes from the plan that "parks not only made urban environments prettier but also encouraged social interaction. This was understood to inspire citizens to equate civic beauty with pride, cultural cohesion, and social equality" (p. 243). In reality, the planning process excluded perspectives from the locals. According to Lico (2009), "The blueprint, however, deprived the native inhab-itants of a voice in conducting local affairs" (p. 61). The paradox exposes how the locals continue to assimilate despite exclusion from a supposedly "democratic" administration.

The introduction of democracy invigorated participation in the American educational system. The administrators made sure to establish public schools in every urban centre. Mata (2010) scruti-nises, "In many ways the priest, as the model of correct manner, has been replaced by the public school teacher" (p. 45). The pub-lic school was the seat of American influence. Constantino (1998) discloses that, "From an instrument of pacification, colonial edu-cation became an instrument of assimilation or Americanisation" (p. 315). The Bureau of Education records the increase of enrolees from 300,000 in 1905 to 1,750,000 in 1939 (Benitez, 1940, p. 413). The enrolment of locals depicts that "the impetus for American schools come[s] largely from within" (Moore, 1954). The locals assimilate through education in public spaces. Yet, church rituals still prevail. Hence, both Church and school multiply public participation in

open spaces. The combination of the two institutions signify dual sphere of public influence. The shift of influence from the Church to the school suggests continuity of urban colonial administration.

The transfer from Spanish theocratic regulation to American "democratic" governance drives the locals to further adapt to imperial interests. The locals continue to see fluid and vibrant spaces. The locals act unconstrained in open spaces. After all, the introduction of democracy by the Americans proves to be a myth (Constantino, 1998). Unrecognition of locals in the planning process combined with misconception of democracy ascertains a false claim of "progress". To sum up, "state-funded city plans endorsed imperial politics and helped push the Philippines towards a path of 'progress' never seen before in the archipelago even though, from the Filipino perspective, the American standpoint lacked understanding of the native context" (Morley, 2010, p. 246).

Shatkin (2005) remarks, "The social inequities inherent in the colonial experience had transformed Manila into a symbol of the failures of American rule" (p. 585). Thereafter, postcolonial Philippine city succumbed to globalisation. Metro Manila is characterised by a modern display of shopping districts. Bonifacio Global City in Taguig and Makati Central Business District represent examples of modernisation of public spaces vis-à-vis commercialisation. Public spaces diminish due to its conversion to modern commercial centres. Enormous spaces devoted to shopping are overt indications of not only the continuation of colonial fixation but also dependency on a global economic system.

Socio-spatial issues, such as hawking, surface in the metropolitan milieu. Hawking in public spaces is an adverse effect of globalisation. Hawkers are subject to social exclusion along with economic deprivation. Recio and Gomez (2013) attribute this to the "phenomenon called globalisation, one of whose aspects is that chain of economic relationships that binds developing economies in subservience to the developed world" (p. 175). Unequal wealth distribution on a global scale results in the proliferation of the informal economy in developing nations. Abject poverty in the Philippines

compels hawkers to establish subsistence strategies on a daily basis. Hawkers are nonetheless "often unappreciated, and worse, subject to indiscriminate purges from sidewalks and other fluid spaces" (Recio & Gomez, 2013, p. 173). The risks of hawkers "include insufficient institutional support, need to care for dependents, long hours of work, and coping with the debilitating consequences of material poverty" (Recio & Gomez, 2013, p. 176). Therefore, public spaces transform into venues of the marginalised resisting against socio-economic exclusion.

Hawkers contest the occupation of public spaces, although conversely their claim is outright downplayed by state regulations. Shatkin (2005) critiques, "The Philippine government has increasingly encouraged private-sector involvement in planning and focused less attention on the development and maintenance of public space" (p. 579). The strategic location of public spaces for commercial consumption vitalises establishment of malls owned by corporate elites. As a result, "privatisation of urban development has led to the degradation of public space" (Shatkin, 2005, p. 578). The hawkers are left out in the process. The hawkers nevertheless organise themselves into associations to be recognised in the locality.

This section emphasises the reconfiguration of historical interpretation of public spaces in the Philippines. The history of public spaces in the Philippines began in water bodies from the pre-colonial era. Aquatic spaces allowed a vast venue for the practice of thalassocracy. Water bodies feed fluid spaces for transportation, communication, trade, and industry. Water bodies are the authentic spaces of the indigenous population. The archipelagic arrangement and tropical climate, together with abundant aquatic resources, provide evidence of vibrant water culture.

Spanish and American colonial policies permanently altered the original aquatic practices. The Spanish introduced theocracy along with the transfer of aquatic cultural practices to land-based urbanism. Hispanic urbanism placed the church in the hub of the town or city. The locals then devoted everyday life to the church. Despite

the imposed Catholic practices, the locals continued to sense the land-based settlements as fluid spaces. The active participation in Catholic activities in the plazas connotes assimilation to Spanish impositions.

American policies put emphasis on public education along with the introduction of the concept of democracy. Massive enrolment of locals in public schools succeeded even until after the American granted independence to the Philippines. The participation in public education perpetually marked Americanisation of the locals. Colonial practices continued from the Spanish to the Americans. Spanish theocratic traditions carried on along with the democratic concept from the Americans. Public school education combined with Catholic traditions prevailed in the plazas of the urban hubs.

Street hawking is a form of assimilation in the postcolonial urban milieu. Hawkers along with other participants in the informal sector partake in the vibrancy and fluidity of public spaces. The informal economy reflects the resiliency of the marginalised against global hegemony of formal sectors.

Indigenous perception lingers in the postcolonial period. The streets and plazas are incessantly seen, traversed and utilised comparable to water spaces. Filipinos perceive urban public spaces as fluid spaces. Therefore, social spaces in the Philippines are products of the inherent relation to water spaces.

Amidst the challenges of inheriting colonial policies, public spaces endure to be venues for innovative civic actions. Myriads of practices in public spaces other than hawking provide hope and inspiration especially to the youth. The succeeding chapters deal with various scenarios of vibrant as well as inclusive public spaces in the city of CDO.