Slum areas of Southeast Asia: The case of Manila, Philippines

Güneydoğu Asya'nın sefalet mahalleleri: Manila örneği, Filipinler

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ÖZ / ABSTRACT

Manila is a former colonial capital where people live together by working in informal trading businesses within a quite unfavourable ambience. Manila, which is the focus of the country's political, economic, and cultural life, has recently grown spatially and demographically, especially with new migrations from different parts of the country. The lands in Manila, which were once vacant, are today largely filled with different urban areas. At the beginning they were slums which were used for housing and informal commerce. These areas, classified as unfavourable and unhealthy for human settlement, emerged with the support of certain political and economic forces using administrative gaps. The government of the Philippines is also incapable of dealing with uncontrollable urban problems. This paper focuses on slum areas in Manila, which are located in one of the main metropolises of Southeast Asia. Its purpose is, therefore, to reveal the occurrence of slum districts and the dynamics effecting in their recent demolition. During the study, an ethnographic method which was predominantly based on observation was used. Primary data collection tools used for the purposes of this study were participant observation, ethnographic interviews and documents. This research study reveal that there are significant relationships between migration from the countryside to Manila, internal migration flows resulting from urban transformation projects, and the rapid demographic and spatial growth of Manila. It also revealed that the demand of the society for luxurious residential areas, shopping malls, entertainment venues, hotels, and business centres has increased since the 2000s and this situation caused the removal of slums in Manila as part of "urban transformation projects".

Manila; oldukça elverişsiz çevre şartlarında enformal-kayıt dışı ticari işlerde çalışarak geçinmeye çalışan yüzbinlerce insanın bir arada yaşadığı eski bir sömürge başkentidir. Ülkenin siyasal, ekonomik ve kültürel hayatın odağını oluşturan Manila, özellikle farklı bölgelerden aldığı göçlerle mekânsal ve demografik yönden büyümeye devam etmektedir. Manila'da bir dönem boş olan araziler bugün büyük ölçüde farklı şehirsel arazi kullanışlarına sahne olmuştur. Bu kullanışların başında ise ağırlıklı olarak konut ve enformal ticari işlerin bir arada yürütüldüğü slum alanları gelmektedir. İnsan yerleşimi için elverişsiz ve sağlıksız olarak sınıflandırılan bu slum alanları ise yönetim boşluklarına dayanan çeşitli politik ve ekonomik güçlerin desteklenmesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır. Filipinler hükümeti ise kontrolsüz olarak ortaya çıkan şehirsel sorunlarla başa çıkmakta çoğu zaman yetersiz kalmaktadır. Güneydoğu Asya'nın başlıca metropollerinden biri olan Manila'daki slum alanlarına odaklanan bu çalışmanın amacı Manila'da slum semtlerinin ortaya çıkışı ve bunların yakın zamanlarda kaldırılmasında etkili olan dinamikleri ortaya koymaktır. Etnografik yöntemin kullanıldığı çalışmanın başlıca veri toplama araçlarını ise katılımcı gözlem, etnografik görüşmeler ve dokümanlar oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçları göstermektedir ki kırsal alanlardan Manila'ya yönelik gerçekleşen göçler ve Manila'da kentsel dönüşüm projelerinden kaynaklanan iç göçler ile Manila'nın hızlı nüfus artışı ve mekânsal büyümesi arasında önemli bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. 2000'lerden itibaren toplumun lüks yerleşim bölgelerine, alışveriş merkezlerine, eğlence mekanlarına, otellere ve iş merkezlerine olan talebi artmıştır. Bu durum, Manila'nın göçlerle yapılaşan alanların yeniden yapılandırma planlarının bir parçası olarak slum alanlarının ağırlıklı olarak "kentsel dönüşüm projeleriyle" kaldırılmasına zemin hazırlamıştır.

1.Introduction

To some, cities have always been the fire of civilization spreading light and warmth to the dark and cold world (Tümertekin & Özgüç,2017:396). According to others, cities have become monsters that continue to grow day by day, by sucking human blood (Clark & Martin,2013:166). Jean-Jacques Rousseau refers to cities as a vortex where people migrate from the countryside, disappear inside, and "crushes the human spirit" (Ellison 1985), Mike Davis who analyses the history and current situation of slums in undeveloped and developing countries in his book Planet of the Slums (2006), states that cities are turning into a scrapheap area where a surplus population work in unprotected and informal areas instead of being the focus of growth and prosperity. The origin of description of this chaotic urban life is often suggested to be migrations (Hua,2012; Papola,1988; Adger et al.,2015; Struyk & Lynn,1983). It is possible to consider the changes created by migration phenomenon as social and environmental changes (Koç &Soykan, 2017). These migrations cause various problems due to administrative gaps (Fouberg et al., 2012:431), arbitrary movements of land users and land speculations, sometimes in areas outside the municipal boundaries (Wallace, 1980). While the physical area is transforming into an urban environment that is structured in this way, the emerging "low-quality housing areas" are seen as the source of various urban problems. The rapid spread of low-quality housing in different countries of the world is based on the World Bank's encouragement of the "build your own home" campaign (since the 1970s)[1]. This was because residential production was recognized as a suitable method for low-income groups in many parts of the world from the 1970s. (Harvey, 2014:16). For example, most of the favelas in Brazil have been built in this way (Perlman,2010). Even, international competitions have been organized to produce cheap housing in countries such as Peru (1969) and Philippines (1976) (Özbay,1989:47). However, the golden age of slums was completely over in 1990 (Davis, 2006:90).

In the years when the World Bank's "build your own home" campaign was encouraged, slums in many of the former colonial capitals in Southeast Asia increased rapidly. In the late 1970s, the Philippines, one of the pilot countries where the World Bank practiced new Urban Development Strategies (Berner,1998:7), was one of the countries where the World Bank's "make your own home" campaign was encouraged. After the end of the period when the land was occupied freely and at low costs, especially after the 1990s, the poor living in the slums of Southeast Asia had to face another reality this time: Demolitions and evictions. Especially the unprotected settlements and vacant lands have started to be combined and reconstructed legally or illegally by the contractors (Brennan,1993). For example, the Klong Toey settlement (Bangkok), which emerged with migrations in the 1960s, did not initially attract the interest of capital groups since it was a swamp area. However, in Klong Toey, which gradually became investors' centre of interest due to its location, luxury residences and multi-storey shopping buildings were built in the 1990s (Berner & Korff,1995). Evictions of the poor from slums in Klong Toey continued without slowing down in different countries in the

following years. For example, nearly 50,000 houses were razed in Delhi, India, between 2004 and 2007 (Bhan,2009). Also, in China, thousands of poor people were evacuated from their homes because of the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Shin & Li, 2013).

In recent years, as in many metropolitan areas of Southeast Asia, in Manila there have been also several urban renewals, where the geographical appearance has changed. "Urban transformation projects," which French geographer Reclus accused of providing temporary solutions to urban problems in the early 20th century, are at the top of these renewals (Clark & Martin,2013). To remove slum areas in Manila, ''urban transformation projects'' are increasingly being used as a public means. Renewals that have been carried out without a comprehensive and holistic approach in Manila have created a new "unequal growth" in the location. This study therefore aims to reveal the facts that the slums in Manila continue to expand due to migration from the countryside; that a part of these slums has recently been destroyed within the scope of urban transformation projects and that these projects have led to an internal movement or a migration flow within the city.

2. Data and Method

Migration could be defined as someone's permanent or temporary movement from his/her usual residence to another settlement suddenly or at a certain period (Warf,2006:301). The migration phenomenon leads to a series of social, economic and environmental changes (Fouberg et al., 2012). Because those who migrate are deprived of the cultural and ecological knowledge of the destination. These problems have also been revealed through various research studies. Determining the cultural and ecological effects of migration, in other words, examining the migration phenomenon in spatial ad human terms, is most of the time problematic. One of these challenging part of it is revealing the motivation of those who migrated but are usually not represented in the numbers of statistics and the cultural and economic problems they have faced after their movement. For this reason, for the purposes of this paper about Manila which has been increasingly growing due to migration, an ethnographic research method based predominantly on observation was used.

The ethnographic method, whose purpose is to understand the desired world and life through the eyes of those who live it (Geertz,1983), requires observation, interaction, asking questions and to experience and live in the culture of those people (Kaya,2014). A study which is based on qualitative ethnographic method is suggested to be conducted "in its natural context as possible" because it is the only way of understanding the reality concerning the problem and its root (Öztürk,2014). The researcher of this paper lived for a while in the slums and had various life experiences together with the sample of the study.

The use of "observation of the participants" during this study was vital for finding solutions for the problems determined. The questions asked during this process include: "Did those who migrated to these slums leave their usual residence due to economic or political reasons?", "Did those who live in

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[1]   In the early days, the first settlers were building their homes almost without spend money. Because the land was free of charge, they used their labour or built their homes by helping each other with their neighbours. They provided many materials (timber, adobe, etc.) from the natural environment. The things they spent money were only tools like ax, timber, nails, hammer and knife (Harvey: 2015:28).

Photo 1. Photo of a civil society initiative for children in the region, Smokey Mountain in Tondo.

these slums have to move to another slum because of "urban transformation projects?", "If so, where do they intend to go?", and "Does the central government or local government provide any kind of support for these people?". Through a snowball sampling method, the study aimed to reveal the approaches of different age and sex groups to migration and urban transformation projects with interviews and observations made three days a week during the period between February and June of 2019[2]. The primary data obtained from in-depth interviews made with people chosen among those who live in various slums scattered around Manila (such as Tondo, Quezon City, Pasig River and its surroundings) were used. An active participation in civil society initiatives for children in the region on a voluntary basis was ensured in order to identify with those who live in Smokey Mountain and Aroma slums in Tondo (Photo 1). Through various day-long training activities and a direct participation in their daily activities, the researcher had an opportunity to observe closely the residents of these slums. Thus, it may be said that there was a close interaction with those who live in these areas.

Even though the Philippines is a Christian country, interviews have been conducted also in slum areas where those coming from Mindanao island[3] whose Muslim population rate is high. For example, the researcher has studied as a participant observer in Sitio San Roque (in Quezon City), where is one of the centers of urban transformation projects and Muslim and Christian populations live together. Various studies have been conducted in Ouiapo whose cultural geographical outlook has changed at a significant level due to slum areas as well as new migration flows since the 1970s.

Along with the observation reports of this field research, other research studies on the study problem were also evaluated. This study was augmented by the secondary quantitative data obtained from Philippine Statistics Authority and the monographic studies about Manila. In the same vein, various field studies other than that in Manila were also conducted in different regions of the country such as Zamboanga, General Santoz, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, İloilo, Legazpi, Baguio, Banaue, Sagada. The field study aimed to reveal the relationship between rural poverty and the growth of slums in Manila.

3.Findings

3.1.The Poor Districts of Southeast Asia: Slums

Frederick Engels and Charles Dickens mentioned the increasingly widespread impoverishment in the 19th century by keeping track of the chaotic urban life created by the Industrial Revolution that emerged in Western Europe (Thorns,2002). More recently, reporters such as Jacob Riis (1849-1914) succeeded in attracting public attention by documenting (due to new photographic technology that allows photographing, especially in dark places) the miserable life in New York (Riis,2010). Despite this, millions of people excluded in the slums of new century cities around the world continue to live in misery. Urban areas are characterized as complex and dynamic systems, as they are seen as productive areas and they mean wealth and power for capital owners (Roberts, 2004:9). These urban areas are often occupied by masses of immigrants and gigantic slum areas occur in these areas (Tümertekin & Özgüç, 2017). Slums are the most important symbols of undeveloped and developing countries. Such that, 1/3 of the world population lives in the so-called slums.

Slums are places which are at the bottom of urban space hierarchy. Each society has coined a different word to define these notorious places such as ghetto in the USA, banlieue in France, quarteri periferici (external districts) or quarteri degradati (poor districts) in Italy, problemomrade (problem places) in Sweden, favela (tin districts) in Brazil and villa miseria (miserable districts) in Argentina (Wacquant,2007). Poor and one-room houses constructed from timber and tins, boxes and cardboards are generally related with large-scale "push-type" migrations (Tümertekin & Özgüç,2017). Almost all metropolitan places in Latin America, Asia and Africa are surrounded by such distorted housing areas (Gilbert,2007). The fast urbanisation and development of megacities could be observed particularly in developing countries in these regions. In Dhaka, which is the capital of Bangladesh, for example, population grows per hour by 50 people (Friesen et al., 2018). These distorted structures have a significant influence even on the mental health, quality of life, and nutritional status of their residents (Izutsu et al., 2006). A dangerous, health-threatening place; is the geographical definition of a typical slum settlement. Swamps, floodplains, volcano foothills, slippery mountain foothills,

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[2] The author was in Manila, as a visiting scholar in University of The Philippines, in 2019.

[3] According to the results of 2015 Census of Population of the Philippines Statistics Authority, Mindanao is home to the majority of Muslims in the Philippines. 93% of the entire Islamic population lives in this island.

garbage dumps, chemical waste sites and railway sides are the preferred settlements for slums (Davis, 2006:121). Slums have been considered one of the most influencing disturbing social factors for a long time (Marris,1960:123). These areas, where a lifestyle without urban conveniences is maintained (Schöller,1975), are regarded as pre-modern ruins that still exist because sufficient economic development is not provided (Berner,1997).However, all these settlements located at different parts of the world are not necessarily poor areas. For example, slums in Turkey, which are called "gecekondu," and which were first seen in Istanbul in the 1950s due to migrations from the countryside, are provided with various infrastructure services (Saran,1971:376). Examples of this are common in various countries such as Armenia, Georgia, and Iran. The most characteristic feature of most of the old colonial capitals connected with the coast of Southeast Asia is that those areas outside the historical frame constitute the living space of millions of people separated from rural life. Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, and Indonesia which were colonized for a long time by different western countries, are among the countries with the highest amount of slum areas.

Social and economic surveys in slums of Southeast Asia show that the government is inadequate in providing economic security and preventing social deterioration. The slums in well-established cities such as Bangkok, Manila, Hanoi, Jakarta and Phnom Penh are seen as the centres of physical dangers as well as informal and illegal economy. A great majority of

people who migrate from rural areas has to work in unqualified and low-level jobs that cannot be promoted.

As can be seen in the example of Manila in the Philippines, slums have been increasing due to migration every year (Berner,1997). However, economic growth, capital groups suppressing local politics, and the emergence of demand for social change are paving the way for new changes in the region. Now, the demolition of slums and the commencement of large-scale construction operations in these areas are increasingly becoming ordinary events. Because slums are now the focus of urban transformation projects for capital groups for gaining more political and financial power.

3.2. Areal Development of Settlement in Manila

As Ortega points out in his "Neoliberalizing spaces in the Philippines: Suburbanization, transnational migration, and dispossession," the Philippines may be regarded as a country in urban revolution and a large part of its land has been converted to residential, commercial, and industrial areas (Ortega,2016). Manila is one of these lands which are characterised by urban transformation projects. It is the political, economic, and cultural capital of the Philippines (Ortega,2016). The trade between Manila and Acapulco port between 1593-1815 played a significant role in Manila's significance in the Philippines[4]. Located in the south of Luzon island, Manila covers a large area in the north-south regions (Figure 1).
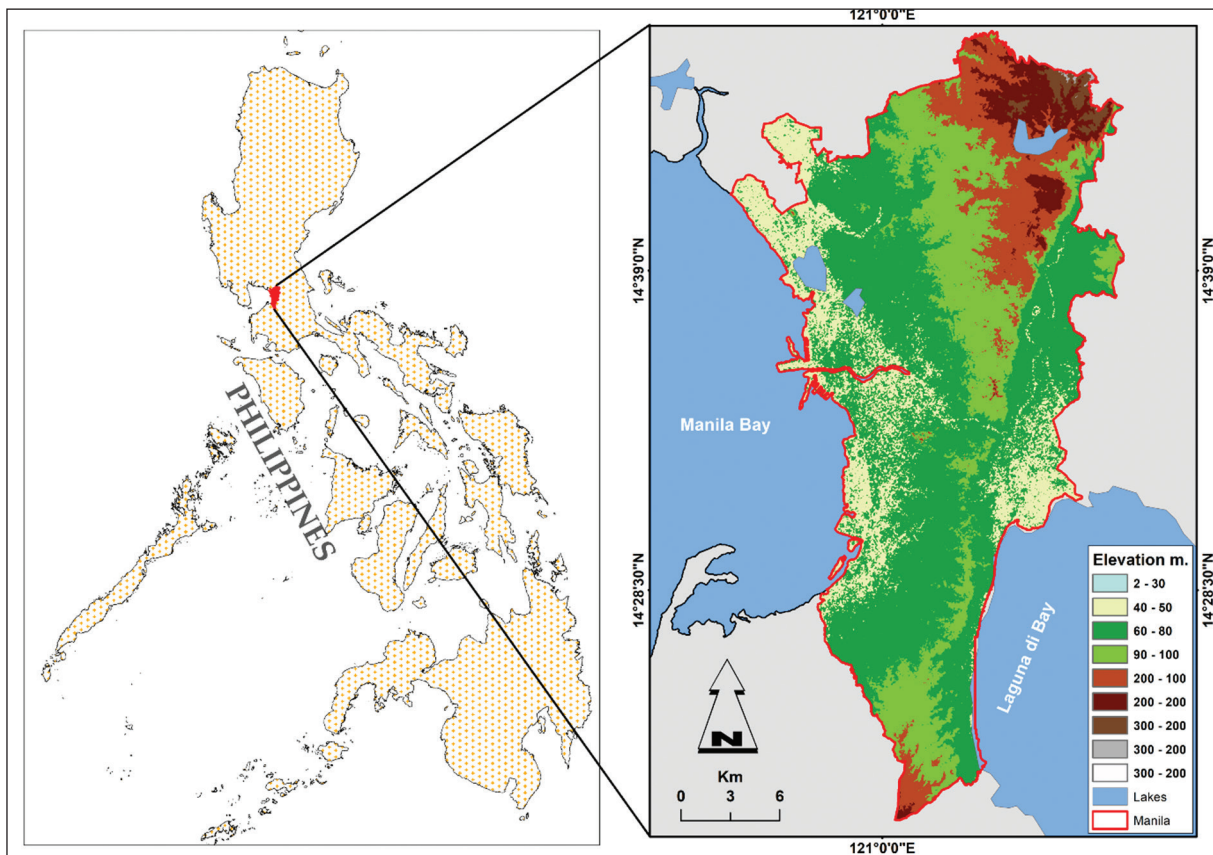

Figure 1. Location of the working area.

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[4] The Spanish, who came to the Philippines in 1565, built Fort Santiago at the mouth of the Pasig River and laid the foundation of Intramuros. Intramuros, which developed as the center of the colonial Spanish administration, was surrounded by a thick wall (Vaughan, 1956: 22-26). The region was a small settlement on the Pacific coast, where 2000 inhabitants lived in 1571. However, with the arrival of Chinese and Spanish, it gained a multi-ethnic identity in which the population exceeded 40,000 in 1620 (Bankoff, 2006: 413). Later, this place, which turned into a big coastal city where commercial ports were brought to life, was called Manila.
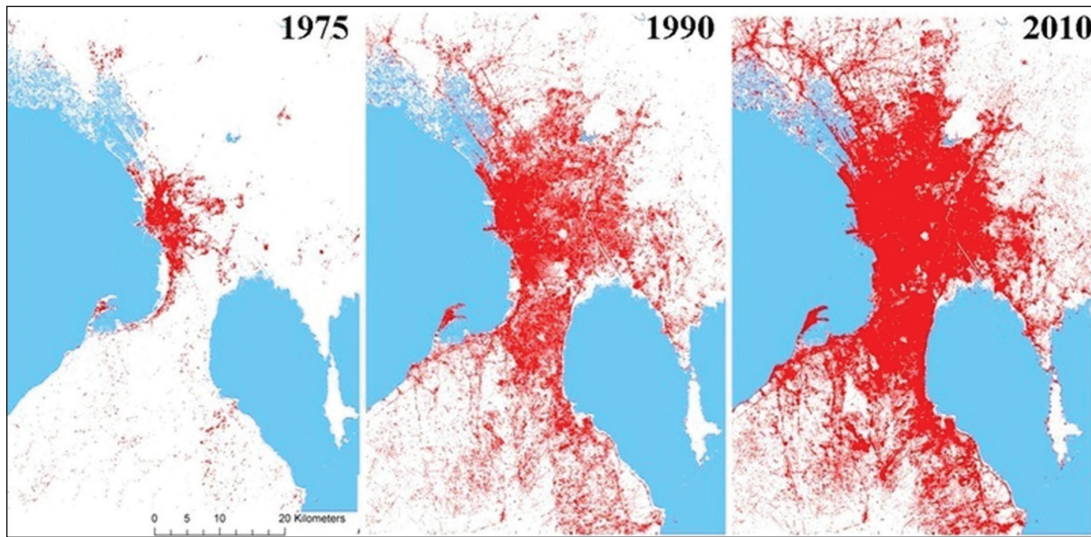
Figure 2. The areal extension of Manila, Morley, 2018.

Despite its deep-rooted history, Manila has made areal development in limited regions until very recently partly because of its colonial past and limitations such as the Intramous' walls, "a partition to guarantee the security of the Spanish elites" from the late-1500s to 1898 (Morley, 2018). However, it experienced a wide areal extension, especially after the 1970s, fed by migration. The areal extension of Manila could be seen in the map given below (Figure 2).

One of the underlying causes of this extension was the intense migrations from the country's rural areas to Manila (Flieger,1977;Abad,1981). As it may be seen below, while the population of Manila was 4,880,000 in 1975 and it increased rapidly after that and reached approximately up to 14 million today (Figure 3).
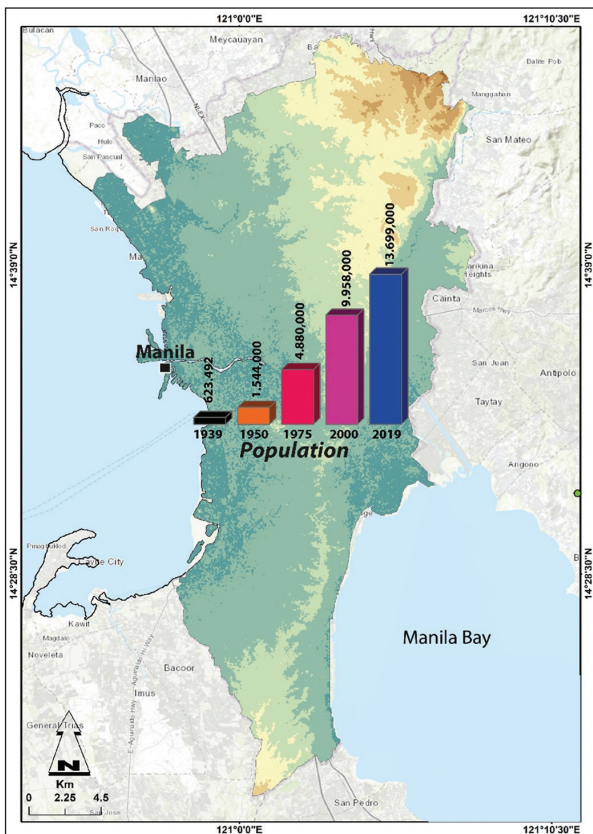
These sudden and rapid migrations led to urban disturbances in Binondo, Quiapo and Intramuros, which are historical parts of Manila. Quiapo, which is an important part of inner-city areas in Manila, turned into a slum with the effect of migration from the Visayas and Mindanao Island, after the 1950s (Zialcita,2006), while it was a district where political elites and wealthy lived until the 1930s (Venida,2002). The cultural identity and economic structure of Quiapo have gradually changed between the 1950s and the 1980s. By the 1980s, the district began to be associated with crime and poverty (Yu,2002). While migration led to the disturbance of the inner-city areas, on the one hand, it reduced the value of urban land and structures on the other.

In the Philippines, there have been internal migrations from rural areas to Manila, where there are more economic opportunities (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Growth of population in Manila, (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2020).

Figure 4. Locations that send the most immigrants to Manila.

The great majority of those who migrated to Manila have been from the Visayas Islands (Bicol, Samar, Leyte, Negros, Panay) (Berner,1997), however, a considerable amount of them have recently arrived in Manila due to the war in 2017, especially from Mindanao Island (mostly from Marawii).

3.3.The Shocking Metropolitan: Manila

The reasons lying behind the rural poverty continued throughout the history of the Philippines are the social inequality created by the Spanish colonial administration, the poverty deepened by the World War II, and the frequent interruption of the economic and social development programs with military coups. However, rural poverty, which lasted until the 1950s in Mindanao, Luzon and Visayas has begun to move to Manila with migration from this date[5].

The rapid and uncontrolled mass migrations that started in Manila in the 1950s made it difficult for a large part of the population to have official residences due to exorbitant land values (Davis,2006:92). Especially, a great speculation occurred in the land and real estate market about the introduction of Manila into the world markets, and the value of lands around the city rapidly increased (Öncü & Weyland,2007). This situation led the immigrants to illegal activities. Formal houses have become inaccessible to the poor hundreds of thousands and have led to the birth of slums. However, the permanent poverty that slums have faced has not attracted enough attention among academicians, the media, and central and local politicians.

Even though the estimated poverty in Manila is ignored and one-eighth of the population is not counted, as the urban sociologist Erhard Berner (1997) suggests, around 2.5 million people are estimated to live in slums in Manila. There are more than 500 slum areas in Manila. These slums are spread throughout the metropolitan area (The Challenge of Slums Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003). Tondo, San Andres, Payatas, Aroma and Ulingan are among the well-known slum areas. The Pasig River and its tributaries, the lands outside the inner-city areas and the edges of the abandoned old industrial facilities are the places where the slum areas are concentrated. Apart from slum areas, thousands of people also live in areas such as areas under bridge, empty public buildings and roadsides.

Manila's slums cannot be geographically defined the way ghettos can be clearly segregated in some countries (Ragragio,2003. In terms of building materials used, slum housing can be broadly categorised as shown in Figure 5 (The Challenge of Slums Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003).

Slums in Manila are not just places where millions of people live. They are places where people's basic needs for food are met and where thousands of small commercial establishments founded based on the consumption levels. In these regions, it is quite common for a slum resident to use a part of his shack as a "trading place". The main reason for the occurrence of informal and poor commercial enterprises is the exclusion of those who live in "slum areas" from the labour market according to interviews made with those living these areas. These places, where various inequalities overlap, are characterized as the home of mass unemployment. Chronic malnutrition is a social problem that residents have to face.

In recent years, informal economic activities, drug trade and illegal criminal acts related to them have started to increase in slums. The increase in street violence due to criminal acts also destroys the sense of solidarity in slum areas. Wacquant states this in his comparative study about American ghettos and French suburbs: As violence and fear increase in slums, social relations deteriorate, and social domains narrow. Informal activities have also increased in slums of Manila, which has rapidly become urbanized after the 1990s. This intense migration movement has forced people, especially women, to create new livelihoods in slum areas such as street trading, hairdressing, cleaning and prostitution. People who try to survive in the shanty houses also serve as a low-skilled labor pool in Manila. However, a "health protection system" regarding working life hazards (unemployment, retirement, illness, etc.) has not been created for this labor force.

Although slum areas appear all over Manila, there are more slums in regions close to the commercial areas. Erhard Berner (1997), who is known for his studies on slum areas in Manila, links this to the fact that it means waste of money and time for people with very low-income to be away from the workplaces.

Most slum areas in Manila built with very low-quality construction materials. It is possible to observe these distorted urban structures all around the city alongside the Pasig River, its streams and the roads, as it is seen in Photo 2 given below.

Therefore, slum areas, where hundreds of thousands of people live in Manila are frequently exposed to climatic hazards such as heavy rain and hurricanes (Davis,2006:123). For example, during the Haiyan Typhoon in 2013, more than 6 thousand people died while more than 1 million people were left homeless (Soria et al.,2016:31). Loss of life and property has become inevitable in slum areas because they cannot withstand torrential rain and heavy winds. Besides the local poverty and climate risks, fires are also an important threat. Even though various accidents cause fires in slum areas in Manila, real estate owners
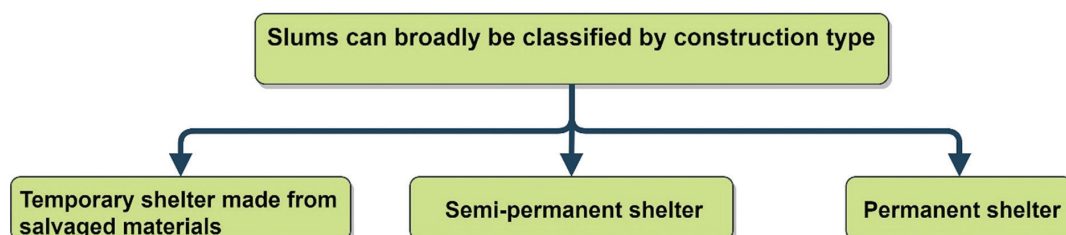

Figure 5. Manila slums construction types.

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[5] It is widely known that the poor in the city include most the migrants and that "the migrant flow is an essential factor leading to urban poverty" (Nelson,1979)

Photo 2. A view from the slum areas in Manila. Source: The author.

and contractors often choose arson rather than dealing with court procedures or waiting for official demolition decisions. Manila has a bad reputation for suspected fires[6]. It is a common occurrence for the rich and the poor, to see the skyscrapers and the slums to be side by side in Manila. This situation paved the way for the sights that represent opposite images, which are one of the displays of uneven growth in the area, to dominate the geographical appearance of Manila (Photo 3).

Photo 3. A view of recently constructed modern buildings and low-quality buildings in Manila. Source: The author.

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[6] In the Philippines, large capital groups that cannot cope with organized local resistance groups, say that one of the favorite methods of Filipino real estate bosses is ''chasing a mouse or cat that has been soaked in kerosene and burned, to a disturbing home''. It is hard to tackle the fire started in this way. Because, an unfortunate animal can set a lot of slum houses on fire until its death (Berner,1998:138).

The financial support provided by the Asian Development Bank to projects aimed at preventing corruption in historical areas in Manila often fails due to new migration flows[7]. After ISIS occupied the city of Marawii on Mindanao Island in 2018, some of the people who became homeless, settled in the historical area known as Quiapo, and others in the existing slum areas.

Added to slum areas, heavy traffic, obsolete and non-renewable urban infrastructure and air pollution have reduced the quality of life in Manila. Due to the fact that areas where urban activities are going to be carried out in Manila are not exactly determined, areas for education institutions and industrial areas are constructed together. Because of inadequate urban planning or the inability of the urban authorities, it is impossible to implement existing urban plans. For this reason, Manila seems to be enclosed by a "hellish order of reconstruction" in the words of Davis Mike.

3.4. Urban Transformation Projects as a Public Means in the Removal of Slum Areas

The neighbourhoods emerged as a consequence of migrations and the empty areas on the outskirts of the city have recently undergone a new areal transformation within the frame of major urban transformation projects. It is now common to see urban transformation projects in almost all metropolitan areas of the globe similar to those carried out in China. As a result of these new urban policies, for example, the mass evacuation of the poor in the neighbourhoods in China has reached incredible levels (Smith,2008:257). Manila is just one of them. Urban transformation projects in slum areas in Manila have become the encouraging power of capital accumulation and a source of surplus production. The first important example of urban transformation and rehabilitation operations in Manila (arrangement of city parks, improvement of a transportation system, development of summer-resort areas) were those conducted in the American colonial period (early 1900s) (Munárrız et.al., 2015, 80). In 1946 and throughout the 1950s, because the fledgling Philippine Republic could not afford to develop the proposed port complex and did not foresee that it should police the area, the site rapidly became a squatter settlement, although it lacked roads and any of the essential public services. By late 1960, it had grown to an overcrowded squatter slum of around 27,000 families or approximately 180,000 people squeezed into 137 hectares of land (Beltran,1982:18).However, a large-scale movement of urban renovation in the Philippines was initiated by financial support given by the World Bank in 1972 with projects for identification (Berner,1998:7), and improvement of the slummed area "with priority for arrangement" starting from the slums running along Tondo, the coastline of Manila (Davis,2006,73). Enhancement of the environmental conditions did not obtain the desired results in controlling the urban problems caused by the slum areas (The World Bank,1988). But, upon failure of this project, the World Bank focused on the slum areas located in other cities outside Manila such as Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro in 1979 (Beltran,1982:18). As part of these

programs in Manila, political and local authorities have chosen to remedy the disturbing urban image throughout the 1970s. The poor living close to the highway or around the airport were often displaced to prevent the disturbance of foreign guests and to eliminate visual pollution during international events (conferences, official visits, festivals, etc.). The local community, who were displaced, were expelled into the peripheries. With these practices known as urban beautification campaigns in Manila, a major change was made by the city's authoritarian head, Imelda Marcos, during the Miss Universe contest in 1974 and a visit by Gerald Ford in 1975. Mass evacuations before international activities continued until recent years.

But urban renewal projects in the country were halted or suspended when the country underwent a financial debt crisis in the 1980s (Berner, 1998). Financial resources that could have been used to renew and revitalize urban areas were instead used in refinancing the country's debt. The renewal movement, which is mainly carried out today in the form of urban transformation projects, has increased even more after 2010 in slum areas constructed with migrations.

As the French geographer Elisee Reclus said, the founders of today's cities are not Caesars who once founded the capitals (Reclus,1895). They were replaced by great capitalists, speculators, and chief financial officer. Geographer Jean-François Perouse explains in his essay "İstanbul'la Yüzleşme Denemeleri" the regions of the city that are separated from each other and owned by certain groups and the interventions of the city residents in urban policies and practices. As he states in the essay, urban transformation projects in Istanbul (Perouse, 2014), which he described as the product of a totalitarian urbanism policy, are organized according to the wishes of investors who focus on slums that are now seen as wealth-creating areas. The same is valid for the slums in the Philippines.

Efforts to demolish slums in Manila and to build a more modern Manila instead and urban transformation projects implemented as part of the urban renewal plan have become an increasingly visible reason for the destruction of slum areas.

The financial and administrative inadequacies of the Philippine government in the reconstruction activities, led large-scale private companies to destroy slum areas and to construct multi-storey buildings instead of them. Therefore, the Philippine government has largely lost its control over the reconstruction of Manila (Yulu & Kapan,2020). Due to the growth of tourism and tourism-related activities in the Philippines (Kapan et al.,, 2018), local authorities and strong capital owners have created new investment areas to attract foreign tourists and investors and have initiated mass demolition movements that have banished the low-income population from the city. The reasons for the forced evacuation of people in Manila are to establish especially shopping and business centres, to make large highways, and to make room for the high-income group[8]. The

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[7] In the post-colonial cities such as Manila in the Philippines, Phnom Pen in Cambodia, Hanoi in Vietnam, and Jakarta in Indonesia, to stop the deterioration in the historical parts of area due to migration and various urban problems associated with this, Asian Development Bank provided financial and credit support to public and private institutions in the restoration and preservation of historical buildings (Steinberg, 2008).

[8] Local authorities and strong owners of capital are destroying the slum areas in Manila for various reasons and are starting large-scale construction activities. The first of these reasons is that local authorities claim that getting off people from slums are necessary to fight against crime. In particular, it has been asserted that most of the people who committed drugs and related crime, which have been considered as the national problem of the country, have been hidden in these slum areas.

cultural structures of the slum-dwellers differ significantly due to their geographical origin. This prevents some slum groups in Manila from being well organized on local resistance. Since there are so many tenants in slums, this has often made it difficult for them to form and resist a pressure group to protect themselves. Erhard Bernerd, in his extensive study on slum areas in Manila (2005), submitted that some local groups have been organized very well, providing a certain bargaining power in conflicts related to the use of urban areas. Although some local organizations effectively resist the plans of real estate agents, contractors, local governments, and private companies, the majority of local groups are disintegrated by the pressure of large capital groups, the local and central government.

In Manila, in the slums outside inner-city, and in areas with high land value, arson events have become a frequent phenomenon, especially in urban transformation projects. Particularly in slums with local resistance groups, this is more common where resistance movement is strong. During the fieldwork in slum areas, local slum residents say that private owners are organized to get rid of slums occupying their land, or slums were fired by slum leaders who received compensation from the government. Those who live in the slums in Manila are evacuated from their homes without getting compensation or applying to courts after these fires. However, it is more difficult to disrupt local resistance in slum areas in the riverside (Photo 4).
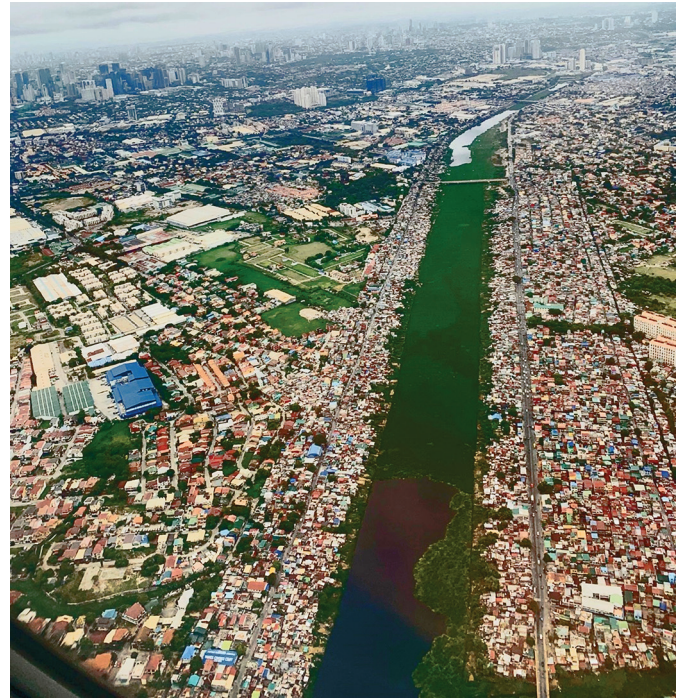

Photo 4. Slums lined up along the Pasig River. Source: The author.

The Philippine government has failed to develop social and economic policies aimed at protecting the poor living in slum areas. Because of this, since the tenants cannot receive com-
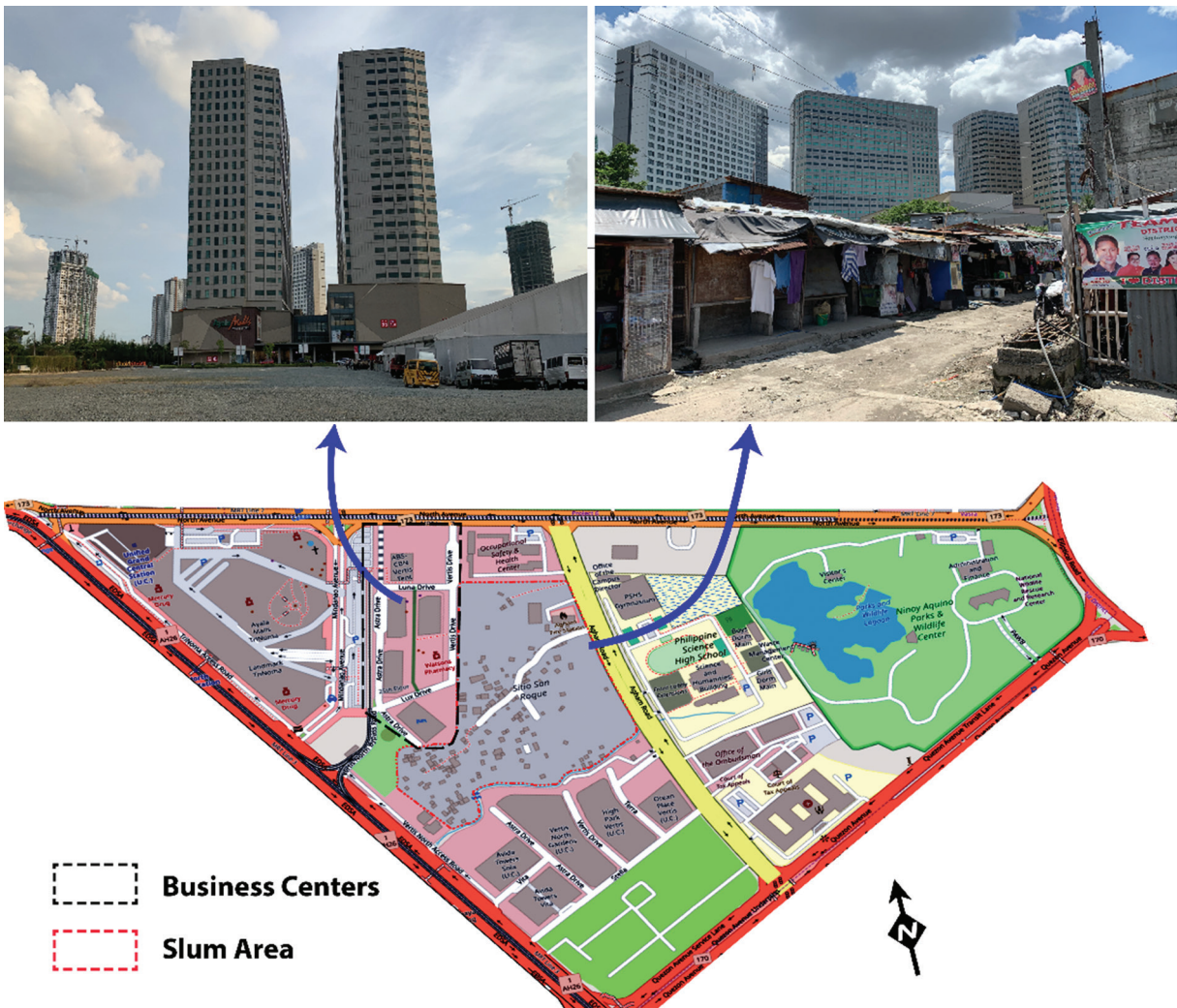

Figure 6. Slum areas and new buildings next to it (Quezon City).

pensation in case of evacuation, living conditions get worse and they spread out to other slums in Manila. Thus, slum areas expand over time to the periphery of the city. Destruction of slum areas in this way causes in-city migration.[9] This prevents the authorities from solving housing problems in Manila and – urban problems associated with them and these problems are moved to other places.

Low-income groups displaced from slum areas cause the birth of new unhealthy slum areas. Slum-dwellers who settle in areas where there are no economic opportunities are not only excluded, but they also become poorer. This situation causes the growth of an informal economy. This is accepted as an indication of the "excess of the army of labor" in the middle of metropolitan areas.

In recent years, giant recreational shopping malls have been constructed to meet the increasing recreational needs of the middle class and high-income groups instead of slum areas destroyed by fires and forced evacuation. As a result, from time to time, multi-storey luxury buildings can rise right next to the slum areas (Figure 6).

Multi-storey luxury buildings built in place of slum areas continue to be added to the city. As a negative result, we can say that the construction of new multi-storey buildings and the spread of such examples, and urban transformation projects, although they are seen as solutions to urban problems, have begun to create a fragmented urban texture in Manila.

4. Conclusion

Based on all the information given in the discussion part of this paper, it would not be wrong to say that, as a result of the World Bank promoting the "make your own home" campaign throughout the 1970s, slum areas emerged in many of Southeast Asia's post-colonial capitals. Therefore, David Harvey states that the quality of the areas built during the rapid urbanization of Asia are very low. Today, it is usual to come across homeless people on the streets, under the bridges and on the riverside of the post-colonial metropolises (Manila, Hanoi, Jakarta, Phnom Pen, etc.) established in connection with the coast of Southeast Asia. However, slum residents have been displaced, especially since 2000, with large-scale urban transformation projects, infrastructure projects and related projects.

The ethnographic method used in this paper and the observations and interviews made within this scope indicated the following major facts about the slums in Manila and the effects of urban transformation projects on them. The population of Manila has been growing rapidly year by year. The main factors playing a role in this population growth are rise in birth rates and migration. People migrate from different geographic regions of the Philippines to Manila with the hope of achieving better living conditions. The population of Manila has increased rapidly, especially with migration (mostly Bicol, Samar, Leyte, Negros, Panay vb.) from rural areas. The

destination of these migrations is usually either the existing slum areas or places deprived of minimum living conditions and public services. Since the Philippine government could not meet the demands of migrant masses, new slum areas have been formed in various parts of Manila over time. Many people living in these islets of poverty try to make their living by working in unhealthy environmental conditions, especially through informal economic activities. The slums on the side of the Pasig River and on its tributaries are the places where creatures causing infectious diseases such as mice and mosquitoes exist. In addition, climatic risks such as typhoons and floods increase the scale of urban poverty in Manila. As the geographer Tümertekin said (1997), the areal development in Manila, has taken place with the aggregation of the population in cities without ''urbanization''. In this process, which is also seen as demographic urbanization, a lifestyle called semi-urban dominated the areas constructed through migration. Often, the removal of slum areas occupying Manila takes place in the form of forced evacuation by the state. Multi-storey shopping malls, luxurious residences, hotels, and roads are being built in place of the destroyed slums. The destruction of slums undermines the informal economy of those who lived here. This prevents people living here from accessing cheap goods and services. It also makes the lives of those living in slums difficult and forces them to live in the most unfavourable places of the Manila metropolis. Besides, the social structure that was formed over a long time is destroyed. As a result, while the slum areas destroyed in Manila, new luxurious areas with different characteristics are built in their places. Now, the urban geographical view of Manila reflects the "wild construction style" (a dominant chaos in the city, and no public urban planning) in Kassab's words (1997) which he used to define Beirut.

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[9]   The demolition of existing slum areas and the emergence of new slum areas is not a new phenomenon. For example, the settlers displaced by removing the slum areas in Manila in 1960-1970, settled in empty areas in Quezon City in the north of Manila in the form of a new wave of migration (Minnery et al., 2013: 165).

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