Chapter 23
Ecclesial Opposition to Nonferrous Metals Mining in Guatemala and the Philippines: Neoliberalism Encounters the Church of the Poor

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23.1 Introduction

In recent years, as a result of the prevailing neoliberal development paradigm and the influence of the World Bank, many countries in the developing world have liberalized their mining laws to attract investment into their economies (Bury, 2005). In both Guatemala and the Philippines, governments have revised mining laws in an attempt to encourage more investment. This chapter discusses the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to the neoliberal policies enacted by the governments of those countries to encourage the extraction of nonferrous metals by multinational corporations. The chapter begins with a discussion of the countries' mineral resources (and efforts of the respective governments to encourage mining), and then discusses the ecclesial opposition to mining in the two countries; the chapter concludes with a discussion of how neoliberalism is encountering the church of the poor. This research finds its home within the discipline of geography, as one of human geography's core areas is the relationship between people and their environment, and conflicts about mining are conflicts about different understandings of human-nature relationships (Bednarz, 2006).

23.2 Guatemala and the Philippines: Developing Countries with Mineral Resources

Guatemala is well endowed with nonferrous metals (metals other than iron) such as copper, gold, lead, nickel, silver, and zinc (United States Geological Survey, 1998). With the exception of some geological mapping carried out by the Metal Mining Agency of Japan during the 1970s, Guatemala remained largely unexplored from 1960 until 1996 due to the civil war (Guatemalan Peace, 1997). However, in 1997, the first year after the peace accord, the government of Guatemala acted to

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attract mining foreign direct investment when it passed Legislative Decree 48–97, the "Mining Law," which: reduced the royalty payable to the government from six percent to one percent, simplified mine site access by project proponents, abolished all limits on foreign ownership of mines, and granted mining operations duty-free imports (United States Geological Survey, 1998). This mining law liberalization has led to interest from the nonferrous metals mining industry (United States Geological Survey, 2004). Goldcorp's Marlin Mine (gold and sliver), in the Department of San Marcos, and Skye Resources Fenix Project (nickel and cobalt) in the Department of Izabal, are the two most prominent nonferrous metals mining projects currently under way in Guatemala (Fig. 23.1).

The Philippines is also well endowed with nonferrous metals (Table 23.1) (United States Geological Survey, 1997). In the early 1990s, the Asian Development Bank became critical of the investment climate in the Philippines and called for a

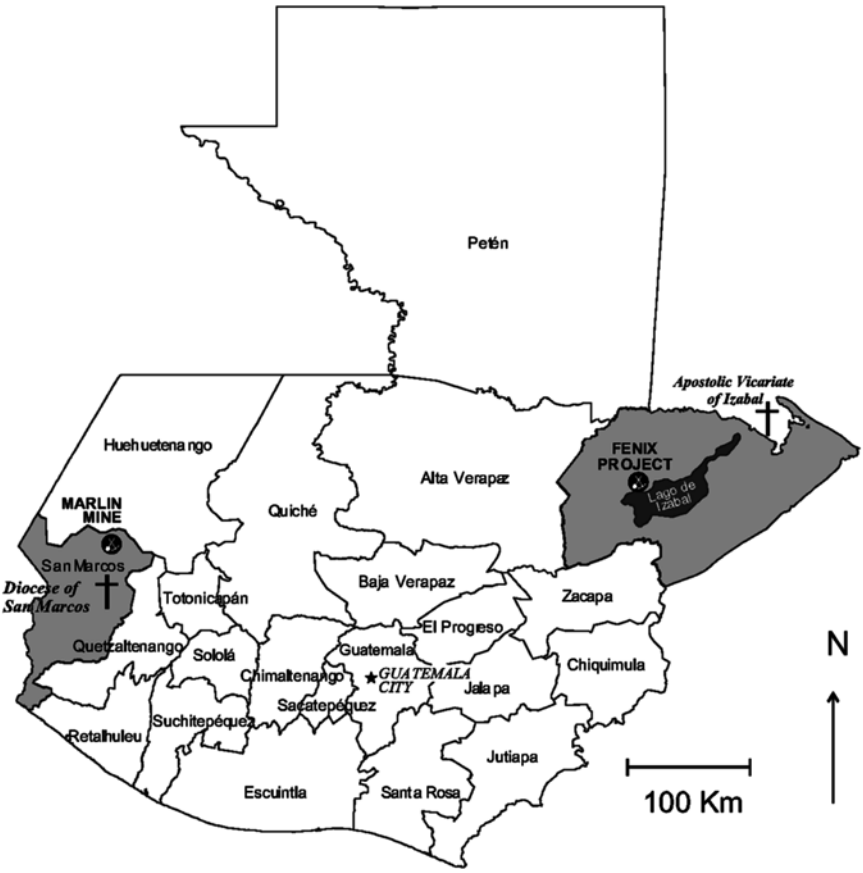

Fig. 23.1 Map of Guatemala, showing the location of Marlin Mine (gold and sliver) and Fenix project (nickel and cobalt)

liberalization of its mining laws (Rovillos, Ramo, & Corpus, 2003). The government began to heed this advice and in 1995, implemented the Mining Act of 1995, which contained several generous incentives to encourage mining such as: a four year income tax holiday; tax and duty-free capital equipment imports; value-added tax exemptions; income tax deductions where operations are posting losses; accelerated depreciation; and guarantees of the right of repatriation of the entire profits of the investment as well as freedom from expropriation (United States Geological Survey, 1995). The Mining Act became popular with the mining industry; the number of foreign mining companies represented in the country *increased by four hundred per cent* between 1994 and 1996 (United States Geological Survey, 1996). The United States Geological Survey went so far as to call the Mining Act of 1995 "one of the most modern in Southeast Asia" (United States Geological Survey, 1997: x1). By the early years of the 20th Century the government of the Philippines was bent upon a development strategy led by mineral resource extraction. Figure 23.2 displays the locations of major mining projects in the Philippines.

Table 23.1 Mine location information for the Philippines

Map #	Mineral type	Project name	Project proponent	Province
1	Copper	Conner Copper-Gold Project	Cordillera Exploration Corp.	Abra
2	Copper	Tabuk Copper Project	Wolfland Resources	Kalinga
3	Gold	Victoria Gold Project	Lepanto Consolidated Mining	Benguet
4	Gold	Teresa Gold Project	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp.	Benguet
5	Gold	Gambang Gold Project	Oxiana Philippines	Benguet
6	Gold	Camp 3 Gold Project	Northern Luzon Mining Corp.	Benguet
7	Gold	Acupan SSM Operations	Benguet Corp.	Benguet
8	Gold	Far South East Gold Project	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp.	Benguet
9	Copper and Gold	Didipio Copper Gold Project	Climax-Arimco Corp.	Nueva Viscaya
10	Gold	Nuevo Viscaya Gold Project	Orophilippine Ventures	Nueva Viscaya
11	Copper	Padcal Copper Project	Philex Mining Corp.	Benguet
12	Gold	Itogon-Suyoc Gold Project	Itogon Suyoc Mines	Pangasinan
13	Chromite Platinum	Acoje Chromite – Platinum Project	Crau Minerals	Zambales
14	Nickel	Dinapigue Nickel Project	Platinum Group	Isabela
15	Chromium	Masinloc Chromite Project	Benguet Corp.	Zambales
16	Gold	Bataan Gold Project	Balanga Bataan Mineral Exploration Corp.	Bataan
17	Gold	Lobo Gold Project	Mindoro Resources	Batangas
18	Gold	Del Gallego Gold Project	Phelps Dodge Exploration Corp.	Camarines Norte

Table 23.1 (continued)

Map #	Mineral type	Project name	Project proponent	Province
19	Gold	Paracale Gold Project	Johnson Mining Corp.	Camarines Norte
20	Gold	Labo Gold Project	Indophil Resources	Camarines Norte
21	Copper, Gold, Silver	Hixbar Project	Lafayette Mining Corp.	Albay
22	Copper, Gold, Silver, Zinc	Rapu Rapu Polymetallic Project	Lafayette Philippines	Albay
23	Nickel	Mindoro Nickel Project	Aglubang Mining Corp.	Mindoro Oriental
24	Gold	Masbate Gold Project	Filminera Resources Corp.	Masbate
25	Gold	Leyte Gold Project	PNOC- EDC	Leyte
26	Copper	Toledo Copper Project	Alakdor Corp.	Cebu
27	Gold	Negros Gold project	PNOC- EDC	Negros Oriental
28	Nickel	Palawan Nickel Project	Rio Tuba Mining Corp.	Palawan
29	Nickel	HPAL Nickel Processing Project	Coral Bay Nickel Mining Corp.	Palawan
30	Chromium	Homonhon Chromite Project	Heritage Resources Mining Corp.	Eastern Samar
31	Gold	Leyte Gold Project	Indophil Resources	Leyte
32	Nickel	Sigbanog Nickel Project	Hinatuan Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
33	Gold	Southern Leyte Gold Project	Orophilippine Ventures	Southern Leyte
34	Nickel	Hinatuan Nickel project	Hinatuan Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
35	Nickel	Nonoc Iron Fines Project	Pacific Nickel Phils.	Surigao Del Norte
36	Chromium	Omasdang Chromite Project	CRAU Mineral Resources Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
37	Nickel	Nonoc Nickel Processing Project	Nonoc Processing	Surigao Del Norte
38	Nickel	Adlay-Cadianao-Tandwana (ACT) Project	Case Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
39	Copper	Boyongan Copper Project	Silangan Mindanao Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
40	Copper Gold	Surigao Copper Gold Project	Coolabah Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
41	Nickel	Cagdianao Nickel Project	Cagdianao Nickel Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
42	Gold	Agatha Gold Project	Mindoro Resources	Agusan Del Norte
43	Nickel	Taganito Nickel Project	Taganito Mining Corp.	Surigao Del Norte
44	Gold	Mabuhay Gold Project	All-Acacia Resources	Agusan Del Norte

Table 23.1 (continued)

Map #	Mineral type	Project name	Project proponent	Province
45	Gold	Banahaw Gold Project	Philsaga Mining Corp.	Agusan Del Sur
46	Copper, Gold	King King Copper Gold Project	Benguet Corp.	Compostela Valley
47	Gold	Diwalwal Direct State Development Project	Natural Resources Development Corp.	Compostela Valley
48	Copper	Tagpura Copper Project	Philco Mining	Compostela Valley
49	Gold	Batoto Gold Project	Philco Mining	Compostela Valley
50	Gold	Manat Gold Project	Indophil Resources	Compostela Valley
51	Copper	Amacan Copper Project	North Davao Mining	Compostela Valley
52	Copper Gold	Batong Buhay Copper Gold Project	Natural Resources Development Corp.	Compostela Valley
53	Nickel	Pujada Nickel Project	Asiaticus Mining	Davao Oriental
54	Gold	Bayugan Gold Project	Zamboanga Minerals Corp.	Zamboanga Del Norte
55	Gold	Canatuan Gold Project	TVI Pacific	Zamboanga Del Norte
56	Gold	Alicia Gold Project	PNOC- EDC	Zamboanga Sibugay
57	Copper and Gold	Tampakan Project	Sagittarius Mines Incorporated	South Cotabato
58	Gold	T'boli Gold Project	Tribal Mining Corp/ Philco Mining	South Cotabato

23.3 Ecclesial Opposition to Mining

In both Guatemala and the Philippines, the Roman Catholic Church has engaged in rigorous opposition to mining. In Guatemala, Bishop Alvaro Ramazzini, Bishop of the Diocese of San Marcos and President of the Episcopal Conference of Guatemala, has been an outspoken critic of the Marlin Mine (Witte, 2005). Bishop Gabriel Penate, Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Izabal (the ecclesial jurisdiction where the Fenix Project is situated) is strongly opposed to mining (Penate, 2007, interview). Archbishop Rodolfo Cardinal Quezada Toruno, the country's highest ranking church leader has also gone on record opposing mining (Witte, 2005). It is worth stressing that these ecclesial opponents of mining are not just a few *select individuals*, the Guatemalan church, as an *institution* is opposed to mining. According to Bishop Ramazzini, "The church as a whole in Guatemala is opposed to mining. The opposition to mining is not confined to selected members of the church, or to selected locations within the country" (Ramazzini, 2007, interview). In the

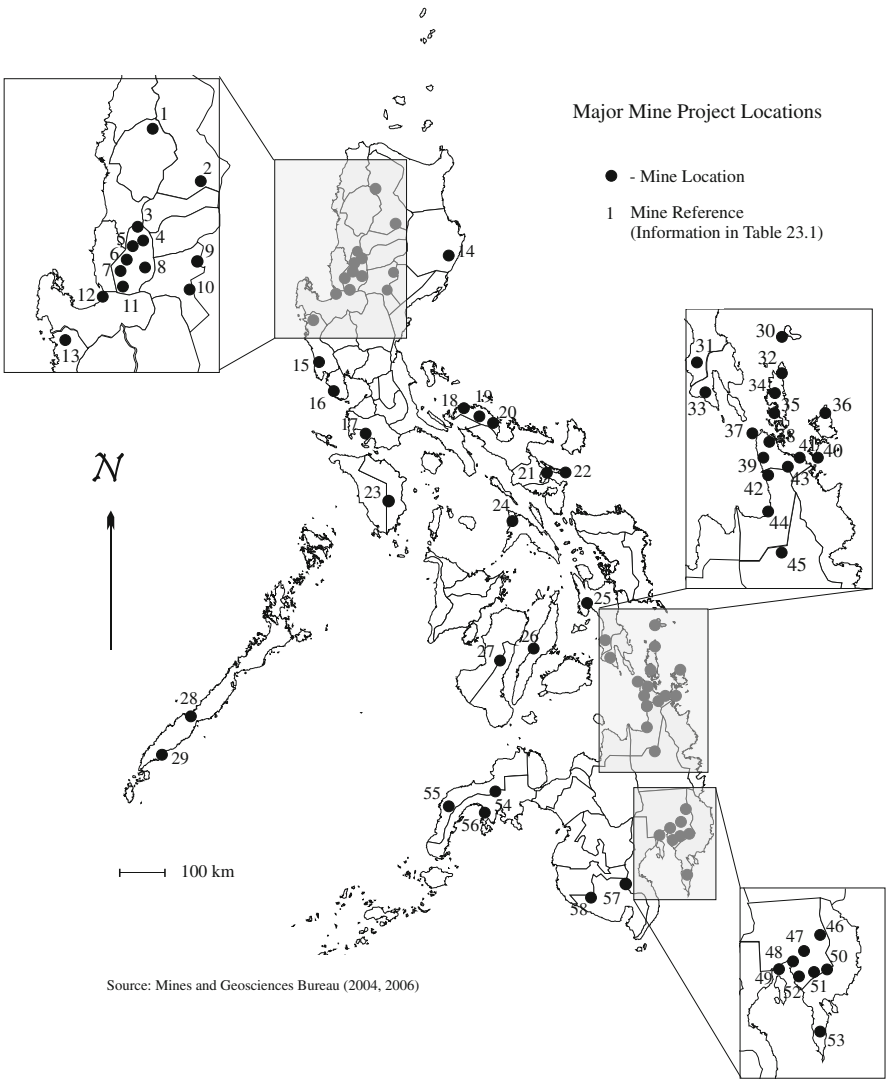

Fig. 23.2 Map showing the location of major mines in the Philippines

Philippines, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the official organization of the Catholic hierarchy in the Philippines, has twice, in 1998 and in 2006, gone on record declaring its opposition to mining in pastoral letters and called for the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995 (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 1998, 2006) (Table 23.2).

Table 23.2 Ecclesial actions against mining in the Philippines

Date	Action
April 1997	Bishop Zacharias Jimenez, the Bishop of the Diocese of Pagadian, wrote to the shareholders of the British mining company Rio Tinto Zinc asking them to ensure that Rio Tinto Zinc refrained from engaging in mining in the Diocese of Pagadian.[1]
May 1997	Bishop Jimenez followed up his letter to the shareholders of Rio Tinto Zinc with a letter to the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales asking for their assistance in preventing Rio Tinto Zinc from establishing a mine in the Diocese of Pagadian.[1]
May 1997	Priests from the Provinces of North Cotabato and South Cotabato participated in a three day long picket to block the Australian mining company Western Mining Corporation from having access to an exploration site in South Cotabato.[2]
October 1997	The bishops of the Dioceses of Dipolog, Iligan, Ozamiz, Pagadian, and the Prelature of Marawi, collectively wrote President Ramos articulating their opposition to mining in the Zamboanga Peninsula on the island of Mindanao; the bishops also called for a repeal of the Mining Act of 1995.[1]
June 2002	Bishop Nereo Odchimar, the Bishop of the Diocese of Tandag, issued a pastoral letter opposing mining in the Diocese of Tandag.[3]
October 2002	An archbishop, three bishops, four priests, and a nun, joined 16 other leading civil society representatives at a meeting in Dapitan, in the Province of Zamboanga del Norte, and signed the Dapitan Initiative calling for: the repeal of the Mining Act, the cancellation of all Mineral Production Sharing Agreements and Financial Technical Assistance Agreements, and a moratorium on the issuance of large-scale mining permits for one hundred years.[4]
March 2004	Bishop Warlito Cajandig, the Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan, signed a position chapter objecting to the reinstatement of Crew Minerals' Mineral Production Agreement on the island of Mindoro.[5]
October 2004	Bishop Jose Manguiran, the Bishop of the Diocese of Dipolog, called for the cancellation of the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement held by the Canadian mining company Toronto Ventures Incorporated in the Municipality of Siocon, in the Province of Zamboanga del Norte.[6]
January 2005	The Diocese of Kidapawan issued a statement objecting to a December 2004 Supreme Court case that upheld the Financial Technical Assistance Agreement provisions of the Mining Act.[7]
February 2005	Bishop Carlito Cenzon, Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Baguio, called for the repeal of the Mining Act.[8]
May 2005	Northern Luzon Bishops called on local communities to oppose government attempts to revitalize large-scale mining.[9]
January 2006	Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista, of the Diocese of Boac, endorsed the "Marinduque Declaration" demanding the rejection of all pending mining applications on the island of Marinduque.[10]
February 2006	All four of the dioceses on the island of Negros (the Dioceses of Bacolod, Dumaguete, Kabankalan, and San Carlos) and the Archdiocese from the neighboring island of Panay (the Archdiocese of Jaro), launched an anti-mining campaign in Bacolod City on the island of Negros.[11]

Table 23.2 (continued)

Date	Action
March 2006	Bishop Leonardo Medroso of the Diocese of Borongan, on the island of Samar, asked Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes to cancel the mining permit issued to Heritage Resources and Mining Corporation, a mining company engaged in chromite extraction on Homonhon Island in the Province of Eastern Samar.[12]
March 2006	The Archdiocese of Zamboanga, on the island of Mindanao, articulated its objection to a mining firm operated by Filipino and Taiwanese firms.[13]
April 2006	The Bishops of the Dioceses of Digos, Kidapawan, and Marbel, on the island of Mindanao, announced the implementation of a "bigger and wider" campaign for the stoppage of the ongoing exploration activities of Sagittarius Mines Inc, an Australian-backed mining company, on the island of Mindanao.[14]
June 2006	Bishop Lucilo Quiambao, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Legazpi, issued a pastoral statement condemning the November 2005 cyanide spills at the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project in the Province of Albay. In the statement, Bishop Quiambao stated that mining will only aggravate the poverty of the people.[15]
August 2006	The Bishops of the Dioceses of Legazpi, Virac, Masbate, Daet, and Sorsogon, together with the Bishop of the Prelature of Libmanan and the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Caceres, jointly issued a statement to convey their strong opposition to the continued presence, and operations, of the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project in the Province of Albay.[16]
August 2006	Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, stated that he wished to see all mining operations in the Municipality of Tubay, in the Province of Agusan del Norte, closed.[17]
September 2006	Bishop Ramon Villena, of the Diocese of Bayombong, issued a pastoral letter declaring mining to be a threat to indigenous rights, and the environment. Bishop Villena also stated that mining will deprive the people of their land and livelihood.[18]
October 2006	Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista, of the Diocese of Boac, and Bishop Edgardo Juanich, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Taytay, signed the "Boac Declaration 2006," opposing mining and calling for a repeal of the Mining Act.[19]
October 2006	Bishop De Dios M. Pueblos, of the Diocese of Butuan, Bishop Nereo Odchimar, of the Diocese of Tandag, and Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, issued a statement opposing mining as it displaces indigenous peoples and peasants, thus depriving them of their life and land.[20]
October 2006	Bishop Warlito Cajandig, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan coauthored a letter, with the Governor of Oriental Mindoro, to the Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, articulating their strong and categorical opposition to the Mindoro Nickel Project.[21]
October 2006	Bishop Pedro Arigo, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, issued a pastoral statement calling for a ban on new mining operations on the island of Palawan.[22]

Table 23.2 (continued)

Date	Action
April 2007	Bishop Jesus Dosado, of the Diocese of Ozamiz, Bishop Emmanuel Cabajar, of the Diocese of Pagadian, Bishop Jose Manguiran, of the Diocese of Dipolog, Bishop Elentio de los Reyes Galido, of the Diocese of Iligan, and Bishop Edwin de la Pena, of the Prelature of Marawi, wrote to the Roman Catholic Church in Canada regarding the behavior of TVI Pacific, a mining company based in Calgary, Alberta, at its Canatuan Gold Project in Zamboanga del Norte.[23]
May 2007	Bishop Deogracias Iniguez, of the Diocese of Kalookan, Bishop Jose Manguiran, of the Diocese of Dipolog, Bishop Nereo Odchimar, of the Diocese of Tandag, Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez, of the Diocese of Marbel, Bishop Ramon Villena, of the Diocese of Bayombong, Bishop Jose Talaoc, of the Diocese of Romblon, and Bishop Warlito Cajandig, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan, issued a statement relating the issue of the environment and the anti-mining agenda to the critical challenge of political engagement in the May 2007 election.[24]
September 2007	Bishop Pedro Arigo, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, reiterated his earlier call that mining not be allowed on the island of Palawan and called on the nation's leadership to spare the country's last frontier from mining.[25]
September 2007	Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez, of the Diocese of Marbel (and Chair of the Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace), attended the Parliament of the United Kingdom and discussed the evils that destructive mining have on the environment and people.[26]
January 2008	Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez, of the Diocese of Marbel stated that the operations of Sagittarius Mines Incorporated at the Tampakan Project would destroy the environment and result in human rights abuses and that he was not surprised that the New Peoples Army had attached the Tampakan Project on New Year's Day 2008.[27]
January 2008	Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista, Bishop of the Diocese of Boac, expressed apprehension over the reported influx of mining companies into the Philippines.[28]
January 2008	Bishop Sergio Utleg, Bishop of the Diocese of Laoag (and Chair of the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples), articulated a lack of optimism regarding the promised benefits from large-scale mining.[29]
February 2008	Bishop Pedro Arigo, of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, led a protest rally of over 1,000 people in Brooke's Point, Palawan to oppose mining on the island of Palawan.[30]
February 2008	Archbishop Jose Palma, of the Archdiocese of Palo, Bishop Crispin Varquez, of the Diocese of Borongan, Bishop Isabelo Abarquez, of the Diocese of Calbayog, Bishop Emmanuel Trance, of the Diocese of Catarman, and Bishop Filomeno Bactol, of the Diocese of Naval, jointly issued a pastoral letter attributing the sever flooding on the islands of Leyte and Samar to irresponsible logging and mining. The bishops noted that over the last 100 years, responsible mining has been non-existent in the Philippines while the results of responsible mining are visible, leaving permanent scars.[31]

Table 23.2 (continued)

Date	Action
March 2008	Bishop Sergio Utleg, Bishop of the Diocese of Laoag (and Chair of the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples), stated that, notwithstanding the lapse of ten years since the issuance of the first CBCP pastoral letter concerning mining, the government has been unwavering in implementing development aggression and that the government has adhered to business interests over the welfare of the people.[32]

[1]Nally (2005, interview), [2]"Philippine Protests" (1997), [3]Diocese of Tandag (2002), [4]Lalata (2002), [5]Mines and Communities (2004), [6]Holden (2005), [7]Diocese of Kidapawan (2005), [8]Cadalig (2005), [9]Asia News (2005), [10]Espada (2006), [11]Ombion (2006), [12]Gabieta (2006), [13]Garcia (2006), [14]Estabillo (2006), [15–22]Justice Peace Integrity of Creation Commission-Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (2007), [23]DIOPIM Committee on Mining Issues (2007), [24]Diocese of Kalookan (2007), [25]Acuna (2007), [26]Barrientos (2007), [27]Espejo (2008), [28]CBCP News (2008a), [29]CBCP News (2008b), [30]CBCP News (2008c), [31]Cabuenas (2008), [32]Lagarde (2008)

23.3.1 The Church of the Poor: Vatican II, Medellin, and Liberation Theology

Throughout much of history, the church was aligned with the rich and powerful of society and, with a few notable exceptions, showed little, if any, concern about the poor and marginalized. The church traditionally justified this disregard for temporal matters by using an approach known as "distinction of planes," which argued that there were two planes of existence: the sacred plane (the concern of the church) and the secular plane (the concern of secular society) (Smith, 1975). Any potential destabilizing influences emerging from a discussion of Jesus' love for the poor in the scriptures were blunted by making it abundantly clear that any poverty being referred to was *spiritual poverty* but not *material poverty* (Nangle, 2004).

Then, during the second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the church began a major shift away from a purely spiritual understanding of salvation, towards a more concrete sense of God's action in history and man's corresponding responsibility to work for social justice (Smith, 1975). One of the most important (and *influential*) encyclicals to come from Vatican II was Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* ("On the Development of Peoples"), which "analyzed the situation of the haves and have-nots in the world and called for serious attention to the growing gap between the two" (Nangle, 2004: 54).

The Latin American church responded rapidly to Vatican II. When Vatican II described the role of the church as service to *the world*, Latin American theologians placed this within the context of *their world* of "underdevelopment, poverty and oppression" and they quickly came to see this as a "green light for social involvement" (Foroohar, 1986: 39). It was in this context that the *Confederacion Episcopal Latina America* (Latin American Episcopal Confederation or CELAM)

met in Medellin, Colombia in August of 1968 and condemned the injustices inherent in Latin American society and firmly placed the moral weight of the church on the side of those seeking reforms to benefit the poor (Smith, 1975). One of the most important organizers of the Medellin conference was the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutierrez. In July of 1968 (one month before Medellin) Gutierrez presented a paper in Chimbote, Peru entitled *Hacia una Teologia de la Liberacion* (Towards a Theology of Liberation). In this chapter, Gutierrez "presented liberation theology as a theological rationale for doing pastoral work among the poor, and as a way of telling the poor that God loves them" (Berryman, 1997: 12). With the presentation of this chapter, with the publication of Gutierrez's 1971 book *A Theology of Liberation*, and with publication of works by other writers (such as Leonardo Boff) the concept of liberation theology began to emerge. Liberation theology is "an interpretation of Christian faith out of the experience of the poor" (Berryman, 1987: 4).[1] At the core of liberation theology is the concept of the preferential option for the poor; Gutierrez referred to the preferential option for the poor as liberation theology's "central theme" (Gutierrez, 1988: xxv). The poor are to be considered *first* and the poor must be afforded a *choice* about what happens to them; they must be allowed to be "the protagonists of their own liberation" (Gutierrez, 1988: 67). As a result of Vatican II, the Medellin conference of 1968, and the emergence of liberation theology, the Roman Catholic Church in much of Latin America transformed itself into an institution that contains a substantial progressive sector engaged in activism on behalf of the poor. By no means did the *entirety* (or even *majority*) of the church constitute the progressive sector but those who did enter it "played a role out of proportion to its numbers, particularly since they were in more direct contact with poor sectors of the population" (Berryman, 1987: 21).

23.3.2 The Progressive Church in Guatemala

The changes being called for at Vatican II began to have an impact in Guatemala during the 1960s; capacity building courses set up by the Maryknoll missionaries "provided experiences to priests and nuns that transformed them into revolutionaries with a profound appreciation of class relations" (Kearney, 1986: 6). "By the end of the 1960s, the church had made its mark nationally as an institution committed to the social development of rural peasants and disadvantaged populations" (Recovery of Historical Memory Project, 1999: 204). Then, by the early the 1970s, a strong sense of social awareness was taking shape inside the church and missionaries, transformed by their relationships with peasant communities facing poverty on a daily basis, offered support for cooperative programs organized by Mayan communities seeking to escape poverty (Anderson, 2003). As the decade began to draw to an end, there was "no question that a sector of the Catholic Church, inspired by liberation theology, played a crucial role in the cresting revolutionary movement in the late seventies" (Recovery of Historical Memory Project, 1999: 225). Today, the church remains one of the most outspoken voices against government oppression (Smith, 2006).

23.3.3 The Progressive Church in the Philippines

Given the common colonial heritage of Latin America and the Philippines, it did not take long for the developments occurring in the former to become influential in the latter (Gaspar, 1994). The "writings of Latin American theologians of liberation" circulated among members of the Church in the Philippines and provided "support for eradicating unjust social structures" (Youngblood, 1990: 66). By 1972 (the year President Marcos declared martial law) mimeographed copies of Gutierrez's Theology of Liberation were being circulated among members of the church (Jones, 1989). Some Filipino priests even traveled to Latin America and interviewed theologians such as Gutierrez (Kinne, 1990). Eventually, as a result of the 1991 Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II), the Church, as a whole, decided that its direction "should be towards becoming a church of the Poor" (Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, 1992). Today, the Catholic bishops have consistently spoken out in favor of the disadvantaged in a series of pastoral letters and every diocese has established a social action center to implement projects aimed towards social justice (Gaspar, 2004).

23.4 Ecclesial Opposition to Mining in Guatemala and the Philippines

23.4.1 The Environmental Effects of Mining

Consistent with longstanding Judeo-Christian concepts of "stewardship" and "the integrity of creation," the church, at its highest levels, has taken a view that it is the responsibility of the Church, and all Christians, to protect nature. As the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (2004: 287) wrote, "*The Magisterium underscores human responsibility for the preservation of a sound and healthy environment for all*." This has given rise to the church's immediate objection to mining: its potential to inflict environmental degradation.

Mining is seen as a hazardous activity, accompanied by acute environmental impacts (Veiga, Scoble, & McAllister, 2001). Nonferrous metals are often found in sulphide ore deposits that can give off acid mine drainage once the rocks are broken and exposed to air and water (Bridge, 2000). Heavy metals, such as aluminum, copper, and manganese can then be mobilized as a result of acid mine drainage; all of these metals can have serious repercussions on human health (Cidu, Biagini, Fanfani, La Ruffa, & Marras, 2001). Perhaps the most serious aspect of acid mine drainage is its autocatalytic nature; once started, it is impossible to stop and will require water treatment in perpetuity. There are mines in Spain, closed over 4,500 years ago, which are still emitting acid mine drainage today (Le Blanc, Morales, Borrego, & Elbaz-Poulichet, 2000). Toxic chemical spills have also occurred while transporting hazardous chemicals, such as cyanide and mercury, to and from mines (Ingelson, Urzua, & Holden, 2006). In the state of Montana, in the United States,

citizen concerns about cyanide leaks from mining operations led to a citizen initiative outlawing the use of cyanide leaching (Holden, Jacobson, & Moran, 2007). Even if no acid mine drainage occurs, or chemicals are spilled, mining operations can cause major disruptions in groundwater regimes and the drying up of springs adjacent to, and even several kilometers away from, the mine (National Research Council, 1999).

Members of the Guatemalan church echoed all of the preceding concerns about the environmental effects of mining. Vinicio Lopez, an engineer employed by the Pastoral Commission for Peace and Ecology of the Diocese of San Marco, pointed out that the ore deposits at the Marlin Mine are sulphide ore deposits and there are indications of acid mine drainage occurring in areas near the mine (Lopez, 2007, interview). Consistent with these observations of acid mine drainage, Flaviano Bianchini, a visiting Italian scientist, found that a river near the mine had elevated levels of aluminum, copper, and manganese (Lopez, 2007, interview). Both Bishop Ramazzini and Fernando Bermudez, the Director of the Human Rights Desk for the Diocese of San Marcos, stated they were worried about cyanide being spilled at the Marlin Mine (Bermudez, 2007, interview; Ramazzini, 2007, interview). Vinicio Lopez also articulated a concern about the amount of water used at the mine; according to Lopez, the mining company is using 250,000 liters *an hour* while a campesino family uses 60 liters *a day* (Lopez, 2007, interview; Witte, 2005). In the words of Fernando Bermudez, "We can live without gold, but we cannot live without water" (Bermudez, 2007, interview).

Similarly, members of the church in the Philippines also articulated their concerns about the environmental effects of mining. According to Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez of the Diocese of Marbel, "we must think of generations yet to come" (Gutierrez, 2005, interview). Father Lauro Mozo, from St. Peter and St. Paul Parish in the Diocese of Surigao, was of the view that "if the mines go ahead, there will be nothing left but pollution" (Mozo, 2004, interview). Members of the Philippine Church also adopt a position that mining violates the integrity of creation through its environmental effects. Bishop Gutierrez is of the view that "all things are interconnected" and that "what happens to one thing will affect the rest of things in the web of life" (Gutierrez, 2005, interview). According to Father Peter Geremia, in the Diocese of Kidapawan, "Nature is what is good, and the benefits of it must be considered" (Geremia, 2005, interview).

23.4.1.1 The Impact of Mining's Environmental Effects on the Poor

Intimately related to the church's concern about mining's environmental effects is the concern of the church that mining may lead to environmental degradation, which will deprive the poor of their livelihoods. The majority of the rural poor in both countries are engaged in subsistence activities (David, 2003; Smith, 2006). Should there be a mining related environmental disruption, such as acid mine drainage, a cyanide spill, or a drawing down of the water table, the poor will be thrust from subsistence into destitution (Figs. 23.3 and 23.4).

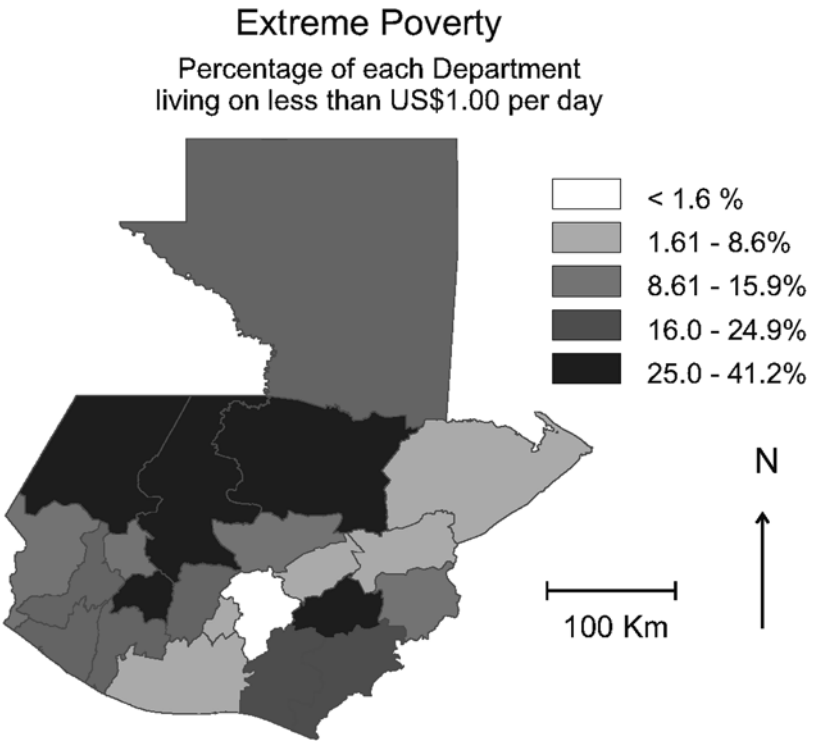

Fig. 23.3 Extreme poverty in Guatemala. (Data source: Gobierno de Guatemala, 2006)

In Guatemala, in the Diocese of San Marcos, Vinicio Lopez pointed out that most of the people are engaged in subsistence agriculture and he is worried about the heavy use of water by the Marlin Mine leading to a reduction of agricultural output (Lopez, 2007, interview). Father Daniel Vogt, a Priest at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Puerto Barrios, expressed a concern that the Fenix Project could adversely affect communities by depriving them of farmland, or by depriving them of water necessary for their subsistence agricultural activities (Vogt, 2007, interview).

In the Philippines, the CBCP emphasized the importance of protecting access to the resources needed by the poor in its January 2006 pastoral letter when it declared, "We believe that the Mining Act destroys life. The right to life of people is inseparable from their right to sources of food and livelihood. Allowing the interests of big mining corporations to prevail over people's right to these sources amounts to violating their right to life" (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 2006: 1). Bishop Gutierrez specifically pointed out how the Tampakan project could lead to a "water crisis" on the island of Mindanao by disrupting the water supply of the area in the vicinity of the mine (Estabillo, 2006). This is an important

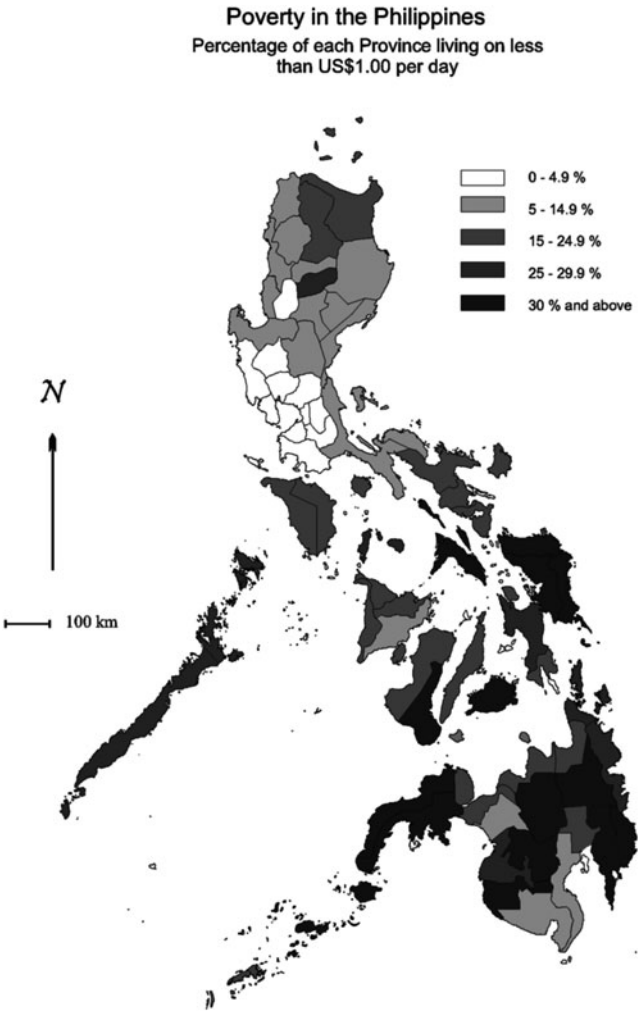

Fig. 23.4 Poverty in the Philippines. (Source: NSCB, 2005)

concern in the Philippines as many parts of the archipelago are vulnerable to *El Nino* induced drought (Fig. 23.5) (Bankoff, 1999). During an *El Nino* event, many parts of the Philippines can experience drastic decreases in precipitation. When this occurs, groundwater resources become essential for agricultural activities. If, however, groundwater is unavailable, due to mine pit dewatering, agriculture, the source of income for 70 percent of the rural poor, could be faced with a serious challenge (David, 2003).

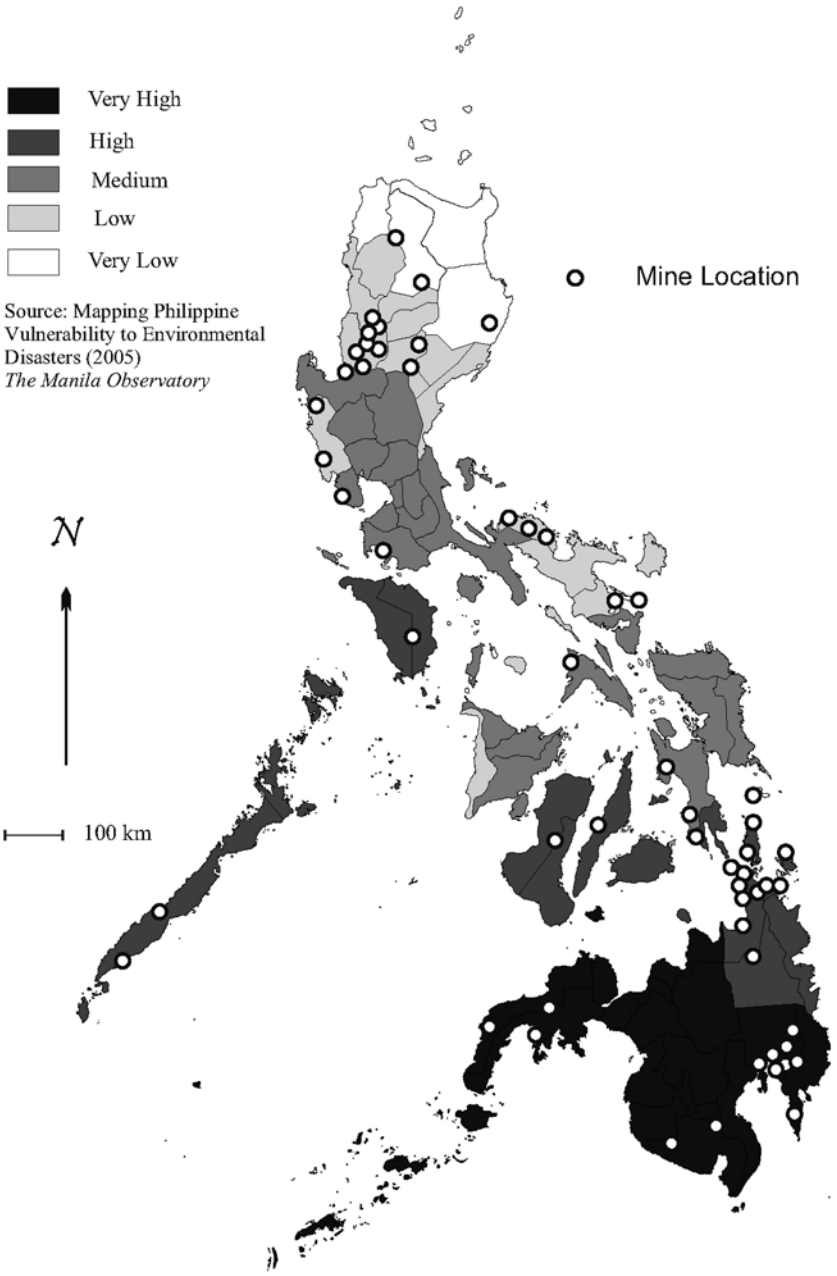

Fig. 23.5 Vulnerability of the Philippines to El Nino Induced Drought

A concern of the church with the consequences of environmental degradation upon peoples' *livelihoods* is a new concern of the progressive church. With the notable, and important, exception of Leonardo Boff (Boff, 1997), the progressive church has not always had an interest in ecology and the environment; rather, the main focus of it has been upon how societal relations affect the poor. In recent years, however, this has begun to change as members of the progressive church have begun to take into account what may be called "the ecology of the poor," which is a discussion of how a worsening of the environment, upon which many poor people rely, can further impoverish them (Baltodano, 2002; Brackley & Schubeck, 2002).

23.4.1.2 Mining as a Threat to Ethnodiversity

The church, at its highest levels, has made the protection of indigenous peoples, and their cultures, a high priority (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004). In both Guatemala, and the Philippines, the church has objected to mining because of the threat it poses to the cultures of the indigenous inhabitants of both countries.

In Guatemala it is estimated that the indigenous population comprises roughly 55 percent of the country's total population (Thorp, Caumartin, & Gray-Molina, 2006). Collectively referred to as "Mayans," there are approximately twenty-one different ethno-linguistic groups in the country, with some of the more prominent Mayan groups being the *Mam* (in the Department of San Marcos), and the *Q'eqchi* (in the Departments of Alta Verapaz and Izabal) (Dictaan-Bang-oa & Medrana, 2004). An important concern of the church in Guatemala is the effect that mining may have upon these indigenous peoples, particularly if they are displaced from their lands by mining. Vinicio Lopez expressed his concern that the government's promotion of mining could deprive the Mam-Mayans of their land, change cultural relationships, and change social relationships (Lopez, 2007, interview). Mining could lead to a destruction of Mayan culture by changing conduct patterns, and by exposing young people to the influences of other cultures (Lopez, 2007, interview). In addition to having concerns about the possibility of mining displacing indigenous peoples, members of the church adopt a view that mining is proceeding without the consent of the indigenous communities near the mines. When the government signed the 1996 peace accord with the URNG it agreed to be bound by the provisions of the Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO-169), which states that indigenous peoples must be consulted about, and must consent to, any development that could affect them or the lands upon which they live (Witte, 2005). According to Fernando Bermudez, Legislative Decree 48–97 has violated ILO-169 because it contains no provisions requiring that indigenous communities affected by mining must consent before it proceeds (Bermudez, 2007, interview). Bishop Ramazzini is of the view that it is absolutely necessary to have community consultation before any mining projects proceed and that it is essential for people affected by mining projects to have a choice about *whether or not* projects go ahead, not just a choice about *how* projects should be *implemented* (Ramazzini, 2007, interview).

In the Philippines, indigenous peoples are those peoples who have a historical continuity with the pre-Islamic and pre-Hispanic society of that country (Holden, 2005). These peoples constitute approximately 15–20 per cent of the population and approximately two-thirds of whom live on the island of Mindanao, where they are referred to as "Lumads," while the remaining one-third of them live in the Cordillera of the island of Luzon, where they are referred to as "Igorots" (Holden, 2005). These peoples live primarily in rural areas and in engage in subsistence agriculture and fishing (Holden, 2005). In the Philippines, half of all areas identified in mining applications are in areas inhabited by indigenous peoples (Holden, 2005). As in Guatemala, a serious concern about the welfare of indigenous peoples in the Philippines is the concept of displacement. Anthropologists have long maintained that ancestral lands are essential for tribal survival in the archipelago (Eder, 1987). The encroachment of mining on to ancestral lands often results in displacement, in the words of Sister Susan Bolanio, of the Oblates of Notre Dame, "once indigenous peoples are displaced, their lives will be destroyed; they will have to create a new community and their culture will become extinct" (Bolanio, 2005, interview). Members of the church have also adopted a view that mining is proceeding without the consent of the indigenous communities near the mines (Manguiran, 2005, interview). The Philippines, unlike Guatemala, has not ratified ILO-169; however, in 1997, the Philippine Congress passed the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), which requires the free, prior, and informed, consent of all members of an indigenous cultural community to be acquired as a precondition for the utilization of natural resources on their lands (Holden & Ingelson, 2007). IPRA, as a piece of *legislation*, does a good job of ensuring indigenous people their rights; the problem lies not with the law, but with the government's reluctance to *enforce* the law (Holden & Ingelson, 2007). According to Anthony Badilla, the Program Coordinator of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, "IPRA is a landmark piece of legislation. It is, however, poorly implemented because indigenous people are not a high priority of the government. The National Commission on Indigenous people does a poor job as it lacks the necessary resources to implement programs" (Badilla, 2005, interview).

Just as the church advocates on behalf of the environment, and acts to protect *biodiversity*, it acts on behalf of indigenous peoples and acts to protect *ethnodiversity*. The church has consistently demonstrated a commitment to defend indigenous peoples, and to defend indigenous cultures, because they are among the poorest members of society (Baltodano, 2002). Gutierrez (1988: xxii) discussed "a commitment of the church to races that have for centuries been neglected and mistreated." Boff (1997: 191) wrote that: "To enhance the dignity of all and protect and promote it, starting with the lives of original peoples and of those who are most threatened, as the liberation church seeks to do with its liberation theology, is an expression of spirituality." The church is also committed to serve the Mayans, Igorots, and Lumads without engaging in a process of proselytization to convert them to Catholicism. "In order to arrive at the *truth* of the Christian faith, one must begin with the *freedom* of

the religious act" (Gutierrez, 1995: 141). The missionary work of the church puts the church "at the service of other people within the context of the local culture" and the church "renounces the mechanisms of domination and appreciates the uniqueness of each cultural expression" (Boff, 2005: 39–41).

23.4.1.3 Mining Security Forces

A controversial aspect of mining in the developing world is the use of armed security forces at mining project; this has come to be seen as problematic because "human rights abuses by police or security forces acting in the interests of the company may occur" (Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development, 2002: 206). In both Guatemala, and the Philippines, the church has been highly critical of the use of security forces by mining project proponents.

Guatemala is still attempting to recover from its civil war, which began in 1960 when a group of left-leaning army officers reacted against a 1954 *coup d' etat*, organized by the United States that removed the democratically elected President Jacobo Arbenz from power (Recovery of Historical Memory Project, 1999). In 1982, the four different left wing rebel groups[2] merged into the National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala (*Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* or URNG) (Recovery of Historical Memory Project, 1999). Fearful of a replication of the success of the *Sandinistas* in Nicaragua, the Guatemalan elite felt threatened and the military reacted to the insurgency with "unprecedented violence" (Anderson, 2003: 14). In areas of the country where the army suspected the local population of supporting the URNG, scorched earth tactics were implemented that led to the deaths of almost 200,000 people (Remijnse, 2001). At the Marlin Mine, there is a contingent of armed security guards, who are believed to be former soldiers (Compliance Advisor Ombudsman, 2005). Many Guatemalans are afraid of a possible return to the violent past and the paramilitary nature of these mining security forces reminds many of the civil war (Remijnse, 2001). To the church, the use of security forces by mining companies is a denial of a preferential option for the poor. To both Fernando Bermudez and Vinicio Lopez, security forces are there to intimidate local communities into ceasing their opposition to the Marlin Mine (Bermudez, 2007, interview; Lopez, 2007, interview). In the view of Bishop Penate, "the security forces are there to protect the mine, while there is no one to protect the poor" (Penate, 2007, interview).

Similarly, in the Philippines, there has been a militarization of areas where mining projects are located. Several insurgencies in various parts of the country confront the Philippine government (Holden & Jacobson, 2007). The most diffuse of these groups is the New Peoples Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which has been engaged in guerrilla warfare against the state since 1969 (Holden & Jacobson, 2007). To provide security for mining projects, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will conduct security operations in the vicinity of the project in advance of its development and, in the words of Major Onting

Alon (the Civic Affairs Officer of the Sixth Infantry Division), "is there to secure" (Alon, 2005, interview). As in Guatemala, members of the church viewed the militarization of mining areas as being another dimension of the denial of a preferential option for the poor. If there is a heavy AFP presence in the vicinity of a mining project, the people potentially affected by the project will be intimidated into being quiet; the AFP presence will deter people from being able to express their dislike of the mine and thus it will deny them of a choice over whether or not the mine will be located in the area. According to Bishop De Dios M. Pueblos, the Bishop of the Diocese of Butuan, "The military are simply there to intimidate people" (De Dios M. Pueblos, 2005, interview).

23.4.1.4 Mining and Corruption

In view of the potential for adverse environmental effects inherent in mining, it is imperative that mining be subject to a through regulatory framework (National Research Council, 1999). In developed countries, with well-developed legal institutions, mining companies will be subjected to strict regulations that govern their activities; in Guatemala and the Philippines, the high corruption inherent in those countries may allow these companies to behave as they see fit.

Guatemala has been described by Sundberg (2002: 78) as a country "fraught with violence, corruption, racism, and a deepening mistrust of political institutions and judicial solutions." To members of the church, these high levels of corruption are a serious problem in that they serve as a further factor that denies the poor a preferential option (Vogt, 2007, interview). In an atmosphere of high corruption the concerns of the poor will not be listened to and the government will be beholden to those capable of paying the largest bribes. According to Fernando Bermudez, "The state does not think about capturing money to help the poor; it thinks about helping those who control the state" (Bermudez, 2007, interview).

With respect to the Philippines, there is a substantial body of literature documenting the extent of corruption (Linantud, 2005). Filipino society has been described as "a society in which nepotism, bribery, gift-giving and exchange of favors are the rule not the exception" (Kirk, 2005: 3). This society is governed by a "thoroughly corrupt ruling class far more concerned about their intertwining networks of family and friends rather than the needs of a people in distress" (Kirk, 2005: 20). This corruption is so pervasive many in the church view it is being an impediment to the implementation of responsible mining in the Philippines. Father Romeo Catedral, the Social Action Director of the Diocese of Marbel, opined a view that "the Mining Act is problematic given the poor governance in the Philippines" (Catedral, 2005, interview). Corruption becomes a salient issue whenever consent is required as a precondition of mining from indigenous communities, pursuant to the auspices of IPRA, or from local government units, within the aegis of the Local Government Code, A common Filipino euphemism for a bribe is to call it a "standard operating procedure" (SOP). When Justina Yu was mayor of San Isidro, in the Province of Davao Oriental, on the island of Mindanao (from 1992 to 2001), she received

three visits from engineers employed by mining companies (Yu, 2005, interview). During each of these visits, the engineers promised her "an SOP for every kilogram extracted" in exchange for her consenting to the mine (Yu, 2005, interview). Such anecdotal evidence of mining related corruption caused Father Romeo Catedral to find it inappropriate that the local governments in the vicinity of the Tampakan property provided their consent "in a closed door meeting on mining company property" (Catedral, 2005, interview).

The importance of the preferential option for the poor is evident in the church's concerns about attempting to implement mining in an atmosphere of corruption. If mining companies are able to use bribes in order to acquire consent for mining operations, the poor will not be considered *first*. If mining companies are able to take control of governments by bribing them, those local government units will become responsive to the mining companies, not to their constituents; this will cause the poor to lose a *choice* over what happens to them.

23.4.1.5 Mining and Weak Civil Liberties

Intimately linked to corruption are the low levels of civil liberties prevailing in both countries. Philip Alston, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, stated that "environmental activists" are among those "most frequently assassinated" in Guatemala (Alston, 2007: 15). After Flaviano Bianchini completed his analysis of water contamination in the river near the Marlin Mine he began to receive death threats and returned to Italy (Lopez, 2007, interview). Guatemala is a country with a low level of civil liberties and this facilitates a climate of repression that can be used to stifle opposition to mining projects (Witte, 2005). Alston also reported on a wave of killings in the Philippines that has "eliminated civil society leaders, including human rights defenders, trade unionists, and land reform advocates, as well as many others on the left of the political spectrum" (Alston, 2007: 6). Father Lauro Mozo reported "it is common for those who engage in anti-mining campaigns to be accused of being NPA supporters" (Mozo, 2004, interview). These concerns appear valid when one considers that in May of 2005, in the Diocese of Butuan, the AFP charged Sister Mary Donaug, of the order of the Religious of the Good Shepard, with rebellion for her social activism on behalf of the poor (De Dios M. Pueblos, 2005, interview). To members of the church, these low levels of civil liberties are a serious problem in that they serve as a further factor that deny the poor a preferential option; an atmosphere of repression acts as a further factor preventing the concerns of the poor from being heard.

23.4.1.6 Mining as Inauthentic Human Development

The penultimate objection of the church in Guatemala, and the Philippines, to mining is that it is inconsistent with the call of *Populorum Progressio* for "authentic human development," and, consequently, serves a role as a source of illusory, or "inauthentic," development.

Advocates of mining in Guatemala, such as the World Bank, tout it as a source of jobs and economic activity that can benefit communities adjacent to mining projects and act as a vehicle for accelerating the development of the countries where the mines are located (World Bank and International Finance Corporation, 2002). The church is skeptical of this as, in 2006, the Marlin Mine's labor force of 1,132 workers constituted only 1.5 percent of all jobs in the vicinity of the mine and there is no assurance that all of these jobs will go to the local population (*Asociacion de Desarrollo Integral San Miguelense*, 2007). According to Bishop Ramazzini, "a few people have received jobs from mining but very few jobs have been created as a result of this mine" (Ramazzini, 2007, interview). Bishop Penate, stated, "Mining will create very few jobs for people in the community." Mining is also a problematic source of employment in that, sooner or later, the ore deposit will be exhausted and then the mine will close. The Marlin Mine, for example, is only expected to produce gold and silver until 2015 (Goldcorp, 2007). To Fernando Bermudez, the employment generated by the Marlin Mine is only a short-term impact because, when the ore deposit is exhausted, this work will be taken away from them (Bermudez, 2007, interview).

Advocates of mining in the Philippines similarly emphasize the ability of mining to create jobs (Neri, 2005). The church is skeptical of this and there are indications that this skepticism is well founded. In 2000, less than two percent of the Philippine population was employed by the mining industry (Balisacan, 2003). An example of mining's low potential for employment creation comes from the Taganito nickel laterite mine, out of a work force of 350 persons, only 110 are full time employees and the remaining 240 workers are hired only on a casual basis and are paid approximately US$1.50 per day (Tauli-Corpuz & Alcantara, 2004: 101). Bishop Juan De Dios M. Pueblos stated, "the benefits mining companies provide do not last long as the minerals will eventually be depleted" (De Dios M. Pueblos, 2005, interview).

23.4.1.7 Alternatives to Mining

To members of the church in both Guatemala and the Philippines, the priority of their respective governments should be upon improving the conditions of the poor, as opposed to encouraging mining investment. In Guatemala, Bishop Ramazzini is of the view that the government should be exploring alternative methods of achieving development such as: ecotourism, reforming property rights, helping the poor in rural areas, improving tax collection, and establishing a long-term rural development plan (Ramazzini, 2007, interview). Similarly, in the Philippines, the church is of the view that the government should be exploring alternative methods of achieving development. In the opinion of Father Peter Geremia, the government should not be promoting mining by foreign corporations; instead, it should be promoting "alternative education, alternative agriculture, alternative living, and alternative culture" (Geremia, 2005, interview). In short, members of the government should be trying to make the Philippines a better place instead of relying upon foreign mining companies to do it for them (Geremia, 2005, interview).

23.5 Discussion: Neoliberalism Meets the Church of the Poor

The opposition of the church, in Guatemala and the Philippines, to mining on the grounds that it may degrade the environment upon which the poor depend for their livelihoods, and thus make them even poorer, is an example of how, in the developing world, *environmental issues* are *livelihood issues* (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). Indeed, in the developing world, environmental issues may not only be issues of *livelihood*, they are often issues of *altered power relations* in society (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). When environmental change occurs, some may be made poorer as a result of the environmental change; those who are made poorer may become less able to resist the increased power of those who have become wealthy and they may end up even more dependent upon those who have become wealthy for their livelihood (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). In Guatemala, large numbers of people are leaving rural communities for Guatemala City where they work long hours in harsh working conditions in the *maquila* industry, producing textiles (Anderson, 2003). Should mining displace more people from areas where mining projects are located, there will be even more people seeking work in the *maquiladoras* and this will serve to put downward pressure on wages in these industries. In the Philippines, large numbers of displaced people from rural areas have gravitated to export processing zones on the islands of Cebu and Luzon where they too work long hours in harsh working conditions (Nadeau, 2002). Should mining displace more people from areas where mining projects are located, there will be even more people seeking work in the export processing zones and this will serve to put downward pressure on wages in them. In both countries, the poor and marginalized will suffer doubly from mining: first, from their displacement by mining, and secondly by being thrust into low wage employment where they must increasingly compete with each other for whatever employment opportunities are available. Concomitantly, the rich and powerful will benefit doubly from mining: first, from the actual development of the mines themselves, and secondly from the reduction of wages in the *maquiladoras* and export processing zones.

Ultimately, perhaps the most important aspect of the opposition of the church to mining in Guatemala, and the Philippines, is how it is a demonstration of the opposition of the church to neoliberalism. Neoliberalism can be defined as "a theory of political economic practices, which proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey, 2006: 145). Attracting foreign direct investment from mining companies has been an integral component of neoliberal policies advocated by the World Bank (Bury, 2005).

Just as members of the church objected to mining, in *particular*, they have objected to neoliberalism, in *general*. As the Twenty First Century unfolds, the progressive church may become a formidable opponent of neoliberalism in the developing world, home to 70 percent of all Christians (Boff, 2005). "The power of neoliberalism has brought a feeling of powerless, weakness, and despair among the poor as the possibilities of social change have not been realized. Now, more

than ever, the option for the poor must be grasped" (De Oliveira Ribeiro, 1999: 311). "Liberation theology remains important as one of the few counter-ideologies that questions the supremacy of neoliberalism" (Lampe, 1999: 335). There is a near universal consensus among liberationists that "the misery and oppression, which provided the impetus for its development, not only remain; in fact they have worsened" (Kater, 2001: 748). In "an unjust world that remains far from the promise of the kingdom of God, the methodological, epistemological, and ethical principles on which liberation theology rested will continue to be relevant" (Tombs, 2001: 56). Today, in the developing world, "virtually all moral theologians stress the importance of the widespread social and economic exclusion generated by the 'new economy' with its neoliberal adjustment programs over the last 20 years" (Brackley & Schubeck, 2002: 126).

23.6 Conclusion

This chapter examines the opposition of the church in Guatemala and the Philippines to neoliberal policies enacted to encourage mining. The church is concerned that mining's environmental effects may disrupt the resources that the poor depend upon for their subsistence. The church is further concerned with the potential threat that mining poses to the indigenous cultures of these nations, the low capacity of both states to regulate mining, and the intimidating effect of mining security forces. The church does not view mining as a source of authentic human development that will provide a long-term solution to the problems faced by the poor. A crucial component of the opposition of the church to mining is its role as a "church of the poor"; it is heavily influenced by its progressive sectors that hold a preferential option for the poor and are committed to serving the poorest members of society. Berryman (1997: 15) may have been prophetic in writing: "The legacy of the progressive church may yet be picked up by a younger generation that has come of age in the world of globalization, and shares a passion for justice."

Notes

1. Liberation theologians emphasize passages from the Bible such as Matthew 25:31 to 25:46. A classic example of a Bible verse emphasized by liberationists is Matthew 25:40, which states: "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' "
2. The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (*Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres*), the Rebel Army Forces (*Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes*), the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (*Organizacion Revolucionaria del Pueblo en Armas*), and the Guatemalan Workers Party (*Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajo*).

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