

# THE FORMATION OF LANDOWNER IN A CLASSLESS SOCIETY IN LAGUNA, PHILIPPINES

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This paper concerns the historical formation of *maylupa* ('landowner') in a community of small landholders in the *itaas* ('upland') of Laguna Province, Philippines. Compared to the large-scale landlords and tenants of the lowlands, people in the upland view their society as classless and egalitarian. Although this appears to be true to some extent, the *maylupa* performs a significant role and exerts a strong influence in the social life of the village. Focusing on the coconut-cultivating upland area pioneered by small farmers late in the 19th century, I examine the historical process through which the *maylupa* came into being, and consider the changing conditions of the world economy and the local history of the Laguna upland.

**Keywords:** Coconut land, Small landholding community, Upland, Landowner, History