

Analysis of Social, Political and Economic Accomplishments in Governance: A Local History of Canlaon City, Negros Oriental (1850 to Present)

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Abstract

This historical narrative seeks to retell and analyze the establishment and development of Canlaon City from 1850 to 1947, beginning as a barrio of the Municipality of Vallehermoso; to a separate Municipality of Canlaon from 1947 to 1967, and finally to a City of Canlaon from 1967 to the present. The researcher collected data through documentary research and interview with key informants. Canlaon City was founded and developed as a result of interplaying factors. Its progress was a tangled web of various accomplishments: a. Social achievements which include establishing and maintaining health care, education, and public services; b. Political achievements, which include constructing and expanding infrastructure projects and maintaining peace and order; and c. Economic achievements which include institutionalizing revenue collection sources and increased city income. These social, political, and economic achievements are not unilateral but reflect the interdependence of various functional imperatives that determined the city's establishment and development.

INTRODUCTION

Local history must be explored if there is to be a flowering and fruition in the writing of our national history and if attempts to write more comprehensive historical accounts of our nation are to prosper.¹ Despite its limited geographical scope, local history is a broad field of study. It is a community's political, social, economic, religious, and intellectual history. It's a place to look for individual reactions to historical

events, as well as a place to practice demographic research. Local history is a great place to hear women's voices, learn about child-rearing practices, and ask questions about education, leisure, and privacy.² Local history can be approached from various perspectives, including social, political, and economic.

Some researchers reconstructed local histories in various municipalities and cities within Negros Oriental and beyond, from a political perspective, are a commendable effort to understand the

region's socio-political development and the factors that have influenced it over time. By focusing on different aspects of the political landscape in these areas, researchers can gain valuable insights into the evolution of governance, power dynamics, and decision-making processes. The political history of Siaton involved examining the establishment of its local government and how it evolved over the years. Researchers explored the roles of influential political figures, the impact of political events on the municipality, and how policies and governance strategies were formulated and implemented;³ the study of political elites in Larena could shed light on the influential families or individuals who have shaped the town's political landscape. Researchers delved into their political agendas, socio-economic interests, and how their actions affected the governance and development of Larena;⁴ understanding the political leadership in Guihulngan involved analyzing the different administrations, their policies, and how they addressed challenges and opportunities. The research explored the interactions between local officials, community leaders, and other stakeholders in shaping the municipality's political direction;⁵ as a significant urban center in Negros Oriental, the political developments in Dumaguete City are likely to be complex and influential. Researchers investigated the city's political history, the role of mayors and other political leaders, and how urbanization impacted governance and policy decisions;⁶ studying policy-

making in Sibulan revealed how decisions were made, the processes involved, and the factors influencing policy outcomes. Researchers explored the municipality's policy priorities, public participation in policy-making, and the impact of policies on the local community;⁷ Valencia is a municipality in Bukidnon, and its political history involved examining its establishment as a local government unit, the role of political figures in its development, and the political challenges and opportunities the area has faced throughout history;⁸ researchers focused on the unique political history of this particular Sibulan, considered its local context, leadership, and political dynamics;⁹ the study of Katipunan's political history involved tracing its evolution as a local government unit, the influence of political leaders, and the impact of historical events on its governance and development;¹⁰ and the political history of Sta. Catalina encompassed examining its local governance, political milestones, and the contributions of political leaders in shaping the town's progress. Overall, researching the political perspectives of these different areas provided a comprehensive understanding of how local governance has evolved in Negros Oriental and other regions, offering valuable insights for policymakers, historians, and communities to learn from the past and make informed decisions for the future.

The historical exploration of social institutions, cooperatives, and educational and religious organizations in Negros Oriental provides valuable

insights into the region's social, economic, and cultural development. These histories shed light on the evolution of these institutions, their impact on the local communities, and their contributions to the overall progress of the province. For example, cooperatives in Negros Oriental, particularly in the agricultural sector, played a significant role in the province's economic development given its historical association with sugarcane production. Researchers delved into the formation of agricultural cooperatives, their objectives, challenges faced, and how they contributed to empowering local farmers and promoting fair trade practices.¹¹

The institutional history of Bago City College involved tracing its origins as an educational institution in Bago City, Negros Occidental. Researchers explored its growth, academic achievements, contributions to the community, and how it has adapted to meet the changing needs of students and the region's workforce.¹²

On the other hand, the history of Bais Campus II of Negros Oriental State University offered insights into the expansion of the university's educational reach. Researchers studied the reasons for establishing the institute of higher learning, its academic programs, the challenges faced during its establishment, and its impact on the local educational landscape.¹³ Similarly, the institutional history of Dumaguete City High School encompassed its foundation, growth, and the various changes it has undergone over the years. Researchers explored the

achievements of its administration and faculty, the school's contributions to education in Dumaguete City, and its cultural impact on the community.¹⁴

In the same vein, the establishment of the Guihulngan Campus of Negros Oriental State University involved studying the motivations behind setting up this campus, the efforts made to create educational opportunities for students in the area, and its role in community development.¹⁵ Added to these milestones of Guihulngan, the history of its United Christian Church provided insights into the establishment and growth of this religious institution; researchers explored its religious activities, social engagement, and role in providing spiritual and humanitarian support to the local community.¹⁶

The aforementioned historical accounts not only offer a glimpse into the past but also provide context for understanding the present social, economic, and educational landscape in Negros Oriental. They highlight the resilience and adaptability of institutions as they have evolved to meet the changing needs of the community.

Writing biographies has been a significant aspect of historical scholarship, allowing historians to explore the lives of individuals who have profoundly impacted history. Biographies offer an intimate and detailed look into the subjects' personal, professional, and socio-political aspects, shedding light on their character, motivations, and contributions to society. Biographies penned by historians play a crucial role in illuminating the lives of historical figures

and their contributions to society. These accounts offer a deep understanding of the individuals behind historical events and inspire readers to appreciate the complexities of the human experience throughout history.^{17,18}

In this study, the researcher expound into the rich local history of Canlaon City from a multifaceted perspective, focusing on social, political, and economic accomplishments as the foundation for crafting its narrative. This research endeavor provides a valuable resource for residents, policymakers, and scholars in local history. It enriches their understanding of Canlaon City's past and its role in the lives of its people, enabling them to learn from history and make informed decisions for the city's future development and progress. Moreover, by shedding light on Canlaon City's remarkable journey, this study contributes to preserving local heritage and identity, fostering a sense of pride and appreciation for the city's history among its residents.

The story of Canlaon City's name is indeed rich with folklore and legends, each contributing to the diverse narratives surrounding the origin of the city's name. These legends have been passed down through generations. While there might be variations in the details, they all carry a significant cultural and historical value for the people of Canlaon. The first legend speaks of Princess Anina, who sacrifices herself to appease the seven-headed dragon terrorizing the kingdom. A noble warrior named Khan Laon comes to her rescue and defeats the dragon, earning the hand of the princess in marriage.

The people then named the mountain after the heroic, noble lord, and that's how Mount Kanlaon got its name. The second legend tells the story of Princess Laon and Prince Kang, two lovers from feuding families. They elope but are captured and condemned to die. Over time, their burial mound transforms into a mighty mountain, belching smoke and fire in defiance, and people name it Kanglaon or Kanlaon in memory of the ill-fated lovers. Another legend centers around King Mamagtal, who worships a deity named Laon, believed to have power over life and death. The mountain believed to be her abode is called Kanlaon or Kay Laon, meaning "For Laon," in honor of the deity. These legends reflect the richness of Philippine folklore and how ancient stories are intertwined with natural landmarks like mountains. Canlaon City's name carries the essence of heroism, love, and divine power, adding to the cultural heritage of the region.¹⁹

Recognizing the town's potential for rapid expansion and growth, as well as its eye-catching vistas, year-round coolness and invigorating climate, and long-term viability, incumbent Congressman of the First District of Negros Oriental, Hon. Lorenzo G. Teves, in collaboration with Mayor Bautista, the townspeople, and the Hon. Jose Aldeguer, Domitilo Abordo, Emilio Espinosa, Ramon Durano, Miguel Cuenco, Francisco Ferrer, Vicente Gustilo, Sergio Osmeña Jr., Maximino Noel, Lamberto Macias, Pedro Trono, Antonio De Pio, Manuel Zosa, and Cornelio Villareal of Cebu, Negros, and Panay devised an ambitious plan to

establish Canlaon as the Summer Capital of Visayas and Mindanao.²⁰ As a result, House Bill 4346 was introduced and supported by 14 members of Congress. It did not face stiff opposition in the Lower House of Congress. However, the bill encountered some difficulties in the Senate. At this point, Congressman Teves, with the assistance of Mayor Bautista, lobbied for Senate approval of the House bill. The Senate eventually passed the bill that became Republic Act 3445. Former President Carlos P. Garcia did not sign the approved Bill but allowed it to become law on June 18, 1961.²¹ Finally, the people's faith and perseverance were rewarded. Canlaon was proclaimed a city by President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr.'s Proclamation No. 193, dated April 20, 1967, and was formally inaugurated on July 2, 1967.²²

Isidoro M. Bautista, Sr. was the first Municipality and City Mayor on record, serving from 1967 to 1970. His son, Isidoro V. Bautista, Jr., succeeded him by election and served as President from 1970 to 1986. The February 25, 1986, People's Peaceful Revolution brought down President Ferdinand E. Marcos' "authoritarian" regime and restored democracy to the nation in transitional government; when people demanded a change, a chain reaction occurred throughout the local government. On April 17, 1986, the citizens of Canlaon welcomed human rights activist Jose B. Cardenas, who served as Officer in Charge (OIC) from 1986 to 1992 and was elected Mayor from 1992 to 1998; his officials who supported a democratic style of government were also elected. In 1998, Jesus M. Eleccion was

elected mayor and served for three years until 2001. Canlaon City's first female mayor, Judith B. Cardenas, was elected in 2001 and served until 2010. Mayor Jimmy Jayme L. Clerigo was seated in the top executive position in the city from 2010 to 2019. These administrators were agents of change in local government and the city.²³

Since 1986, at the end of the Martial Law period, the city has steadily progressed under the leadership of capable politicians. There were tangible infrastructure projects from various administrations' development programs, which focused on the city's expansion and giving priority to farm-to-market roads, housing projects, health services, educational services, public services, and other projects, as well as creating additional sources of revenue aside from the agricultural products the city has been known for.²⁴

The city has made great strides; it has significantly contributed to its residents and the province, and as its story develops, it continues to expand and thrive. As the island's vegetable and fruit basket, it is necessary to recount its local history from its inception to its progressive development to lay the groundwork for appreciation and recognition of the city.²⁵ This work answered the following questions: What were the social, political, and economic accomplishments in governance in the local government unit that accelerated the city's development? These are the relevant issues that this study will address and document for the historical significance of this locality to be recognized and valued by future

generations.

Different researchers and theorists pointed out the significance of writing local history. Local history is a great place to hear women's voices, learn about child-rearing practices, and ask questions about education, leisure, and privacy.²⁶ It shows more significance than what national history suggests about the local community; it also implies the history of larger communities. It is how general history instruction in schools can be made essential and fundamental.²⁷ Moreover, it can also highlight the investigation of labor conditions, working people's culture, capital accumulation, business leadership, mobility, non-dominant groups, the influence of the environment, and the differences and similarities found in a geographical area.²⁸ Lastly, it acknowledges local historical accounts, which undoubtedly play a vital role in shaping national historical events. This practice creates a problem, for the knowledge of local conditions is insufficient to build the foundation for a more thorough than the national account.²⁹ Therefore, local history is essential to understanding national history as a whole because it provides insight into the social dynamics of towns and provinces. It can also act as an identifying or gluing element in local histories in relation to the accounts of national history.³⁰

This work shows the narrative analysis of social, political, and economic accomplishments as local factors contributing to the locality's development. Using the Social Systems Theory, these factors fast-tracked the

development of the city, from a barrio of Vallehermoso in 1850 into a separate municipality in 1947 and a full-fledged City in 1967. This historical work legitimizes the prevailing literature on local history and argues that local historical accounts are equally important as national historical accounts in creating and shaping national history by analyzing social, political, and economic accomplishments within a social system for an institution's establishment and development.

Talcott Parsons' Social System Theory is the guiding framework for such establishment and development and is a complex concept in sociology. The theory has been used to explain phenomena in economic sociology,³¹ to connect sociology and criminology,³² to set up an entrepreneurship system,³³ to investigate the COVID-19 healthcare response model,³⁴ and to analyze the establishment and development of an academic institution.³⁵

How did the social, political, and economic accomplishments in governance contribute to the establishment and development of a city? To answer the question, the researcher elucidates on the four functional imperatives of Talcott Parsons' Social System Theory.

The first is Adaptation which entails gathering enough resources from the environment and distributing them throughout the systems;³⁶ in this context, the transformation of a barrio into a municipality and, later, a city provided the necessary resources for the establishment of a local government unit capable of effectively appropriating

and delivering services to its people.

The second is Goal Attainment which involves prioritizing system goals and allocating system resources to their achievement;³⁷ legislations at various levels of government and strong political backing are used to establish a local government unit.

Next is Integration which refers to managing potential connections between system components and coordinating their activities. The harmonization of society requires that society's values and norms be solid and sufficiently convergent;³⁸ this necessitates, for example, a strong connection and understanding among local government units at the local, provincial, and national levels to provide what is required.

The last is Latency, which encompasses two related issues: kinship systems, values and norms, and beliefs and ideologies influence the survival and maintenance of order among social units in a social system.³⁹ This functional imperative places societal pressure on it to maintain some level of integration, that is to say, maintaining a progressive local government. This viewpoint implies that effective governance must be ongoing within the constraints of required and available resources.

In this study, the establishment and development of Canlaon City cannot be perceived as a narrative of social events that unfolded over time or a description of the achievement of past administrations. This local history is the result of functional systems coexisting harmoniously. This work is also caused and sustained by the interaction of

social systems with their adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency, which led to the establishment and development of a city during difficult times.

METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive-narrative historical method, concentrating on narrative and documentary analysis. In this method, the researcher collected primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources include the Selected Memorandum Orders, Executive Orders and Memorandum Circular of the Municipality and City Mayors; Ordinances from 1947 to 1985 from the Sangguniang Panglungsod; Annual Barangay Performance and Development Report 1980 and Market Infrastructure Development Program Project Identification 1983 to 1984; Executive Summary of the Annual Accomplishment Report of CY, 1995-2005; Annual Performance Budget Report of CY, 2006-2012; Socio-Economic Profile, Canlaon City 1999-2004, 2011; the Republic Acts and other Legislation from the Official Gazette of the Philippines; and an interview with Belen Bautista – Teacher III (Jose B. Cardenas Memorial National High School); Isidro Bautista, Jr. – former city mayor of Canlaon City (1970 to 1986); Judith B. Cardenas, – former city mayor of Canlaon City (2001 to 2010), Jimmy Jayme L. Clerigo – former city mayor of Canlaon City, (2010-2019); Floriano S. Dael – Department Head, Human Resource Management Office;

Hector Lamis – Businessman, Farmer; and Rosario E. Lumogdang – retired Government Employee.

Secondary data were from the unpublished theses from Silliman University, some history books, and journal articles on local history. The sources were meticulously checked to validate them as essential in writing the local history of Canlaon City.

Analysis of Social, Political, and Economic Accomplishments of Governance from 1947 to 2019

This study examines the social, political, and economic accomplishments of Canlaon City's government from 1947 to 2019 in an effort to recreate the city's local history while identifying its indicators. The social achievement indicators are health, education, and public services. Indicators of political success are the maintenance of peace and order as well as numerous infrastructural projects. Finally, indicators of economic achievements are the sources of tax collection and city income. The narrative analysis of the local history of Canlaon City is arranged in identified periods: from a municipality to a city (1947-1967); during the Marcos Regime from 1965 to 1986; after the EDSA Revolution in 1986 to 2000; and Canlaon City in the 21st century.

Spanish Period to 1947

Canlaon City's history is as colorful and epic as the Philippine literature folklore and legends. Canlaon was

part of the Spanish province known as "Buglas" from 1571 until 1734, according to the earliest map of Negros drawn in 1572 by Diego Lopez Povedano as *encomiendero* in identifying the island. However, the Spaniards later dropped the name Buglas and replaced it with Negros due to their observations of the Negrito tribes - the Agta or Ati - who were black in complexion and short in stature. In 1734, the Spaniards separated Negros Oriental from the Cebu Administrative jurisdiction of the first Archdeacon Don Ferriera. They merged with the adjacent Negros Occidental to form one island province, with the seat of government called *buklod* or *bakulod* as an Ilonggo term for hill or hilly; further, the spelling was hispanized, hence the current name Bacolod.

The year 1808 chronicled the migration of settlers from Iloilo and Antique, and later in 1812, groups from Cebu and Bohol to Panubigan established a settlement there. In the year 1820, Spanish missionaries from Nabingkalan (now San Carlos City, Negros Occidental) and Guihulngan (of Negros Oriental) began to spread Christianity and administer to the spiritual needs of the Christian settlers as far as the accessible barrios, one of which was Panubigan. They built a convent at the site of Kanlambat (Vallehermoso - the mother town of Canlaon).⁴⁰

The most prominent migrant who had founded a community in Canlaon in 1850 was a Spanish mestizo from Manila. He was Don Diego de la Viña y de la Rosa, and he would soon become

one of the country's largest landowners. When he arrived at Negros, he was curious about what lay behind the spectacular Kanlaon Volcano. They crossed the mountain on horseback with his only son, Jose de la Viña y de la Cruz, passing through Mabigo and Panubigan (the current site of the City) until they reached the eastern side of the island at the mouth of the Pinokawan River (today Barrio Bagawines). The valley's splendor is breathtaking, with Mount Kanlaon Volcano to the west and the bluish water of Tañon Strait to the east. As a result, he named the location Vallehermoso, which means "beautiful valley." Don Diego de la Viña, who lived in Vallehermoso at the time, claimed Panubigan as his hacienda in the last decade of the 18th century. Mabigo, the hacienda's original settlement, gradually evolved into a dynamic village. In 1856, Negros Oriental was transformed into a politico-military rule and, in 1890, was formally established as a separate province with Don Joaquin Tavera as Military Governor.⁴¹

Canlaon City was a barangay of Vallehermoso – a municipality of Northern Negros today, in the second half of the 18th century during the Spanish period, during the Philippine Revolution, until the American occupation, and the world wars and years after the Philippine independence in 1946.⁴² On October 11, 1946, the plan of separating from Vallehermoso became a reality after years of endearing travails and representation by Isidoro M. Bautista, Sr., with the sincere counsel and support of then-Congressman Enrique Medina. By Executive Order

No. 19 of President Manuel Roxas, the barrio of Mabigo and the barrio of Panubigan, along with the nine (9) other sitios of Vallehermoso, formed the Municipality of Canlaon, with the seat of government at Barrio Mabigo. Following her inauguration, it became officially existent on January 1, 1947.⁴³

From a municipality to a city (1947-1967)

For fourteen (14) years, from 1947 to 1961, the municipality of Canlaon made consistent progress, ascending from a fifth-class to a second-class designation. During this period, its population and income surged by over 150 percent. Mayor Isidro M. Bautista Sr. took the helm of the administration of what was then the Municipality of Canlaon. He undertook the vital task of codifying the municipal revenue ordinances, laying the cornerstone for revenue streams. This initiative marked the initial step toward establishing a budget framework to cover the municipality's developmental expenditures.⁴⁴ Measures such as taxing amusement businesses and admission tickets and mandating substantial cattle merchants to secure municipal licenses ensured a consistent flow of revenue to sustain the municipality's financial vitality.^{45,46}

As the municipality installed, operated, and maintained its electrical services, the city saw the light of its future.⁴⁷ Budgets were approved to improve the plaza, parks, and monuments, land transportation and accessories, and the construction of the municipality's proposed waterworks

system.⁴⁸ These ordinances were implemented to provide the basic services that the people of Canlaon required. The municipality evolved from a lush vegetation valley into being densely packed with infrastructure and facilities designed to give people welfare.

To establish health protocols among the constituents, the administration imposed that all vendors in the Poblacion have at least one trash can⁴⁹ and prohibited individuals from throwing garbage in their surrounding premises, defecating and urinating in public plazas and streets.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the first ambulance was purchased in 1969⁵¹ to broaden the scope of the government's services, along with the creation of two positions, which are the medical service officer and a driver, ensuring the availability of health personnel for the city in cases of emergency in 1970.⁵²

Following World War II and the liberation of the Philippines, small-scale rebellions and other forms of aggression against the government were common. To strictly monitor people's safety against various harmful elements, it was necessary to report to local authorities anyone traveling with them.⁵³ The city purchased firearms and ammunition for the Canlaon Police, ensuring the police force's full capacity to maintain and prevent or minimize crime in the municipality.⁵⁴ Belen Bautista said:

"The success of separating sitio Mabigo from the Municipality of Vallehermoso, as well as the undisputed success of transforming

the fledgling municipality of Canlaon into a City, is without a doubt the highlight of Mayor Isidro Bautista Sr.'s long political career."⁵⁵

As concurred by Hector Lamis, Rosario Lumogdang and Floriano Dael:

"The highlight of his long political career is no doubt the success of separating sitio Mabigo from the Municipality of Vallehermoso, and the unquestioned success of making the budding municipality of Canlaon into a City."⁵⁶

Marcos Regime 1965 to 1986

From 1965 to 1986, Canlaon City rose steadily from fifth-class to third-class city under Ministry of Finance Order No. 3-80 effective July 1, 1978, and to second-class city under Ministry of Finance Order No. 9-83 effective July 1, 1982, owing to an increase in production of potential resources in agriculture and trade under the administration of Isidro V. Bautista Jr.⁵⁷ Infrastructures such as the National Highway, the city's power supply source (NORECO Facilities), the Ngalan Creek in Barangay Pula as the source of the water supply, and communication facilities such as the Telegraph and the Bureau of Post were operating at full capacity.⁵⁸

Major infrastructure development projects, such as the construction of roads and the improvement of other existing barangay roads, were reported to President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr., in close coordination and collaboration with the Department of Engineering

and Public Works to provide easy access and comfort of travel for constituents.⁵⁹ Other physical infrastructures built to provide necessary services to the people of Canlaon included toilets, garbage collection, water supply, power supply, bus terminal, credit facility (Rural Bank), cold storage, warehouse, administrative office, and the police outpost - in eleven barangays controlled by both the unified Command of Integrated Police and the Philippine Constabulary.⁶⁰ Aside from barangay projects and other infrastructures, one (1) unit Industrial Arts Building and other school buildings were built, and the laboratory room of Canlaon City High School was improved, bringing the city's academic sector a little closer to its goals.⁶¹

The City Health Office acquired a birth delivery kit⁶² and assisted the barangays through initiatives for maternal and child care, prenatal consultations, hilot practices and training, an expanded immunization program, and the distribution of vaccines for deadly diseases to the general public. Health education was also started to educate and orient the constituent about health.⁶³

Trade and industry developed because of the consistency of the transportation and marketing plans of the province's and the region's traders. The production of premium commodities and vegetables increased revenue and stabilized tax base collections, expanding the city's income.⁶⁴ As Hector Lamis put it:

"Consistency in transportation and marketing plans acts as a

catalyst for the development of trade and industry, leading to increased production of premium commodities and vegetables, bolstering revenue, and providing stability to tax base collections, ultimately fueling the city's income growth."⁶⁵

After the EDSA Revolution 1986 to 2000

On the occasion of the EDSA peaceful revolution toppling Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr.'s authoritarian regime, the people of Canlaon welcomed the son of Canlaon and the oppressed fighter, Jose B. Cardenas, as the Officer-in-Charge along with his officials who believed in a democratic form of government replacing Isidro V. Bautista Jr.⁶⁶

Because Canlaon City is the source of vegetables for the island and neighboring provinces, there was a push among farmers and other business owners for a separate Trading Post for vegetable products. It would make it easier for farmers to transport their agricultural products to a single market where retailers and other traders would also be waiting to do business. The Trading Post was built and became a hub of commerce for the business-agricultural peoples. It also included a well-planned and spaced stockyard. Additionally, three hectares were purchased for the Emergency Hospital, which would be strategically located in the middle of the city to make it accessible to people from various rural areas.⁶⁷ More barangay roads, school

buildings, city street concreting, and the construction of Multi-Purpose Pavement (MPP) projects in multiple barangays were completed. Salary increases for city officials and employees were also implemented, raising their standard of living. In general, there has been an improvement in social services in just two (2) years.⁶⁸

In 1992, Jose B. Cardenas won the elections and ensured the continuation of all the projects and programs he devised for the city and its constituents, raising expectations for the airport, the Malaiba Spring Recreational Inland Resort, a mini-hydro power plant, and the completion of the Cultural and Sports Center with a swimming pool. Also made operational.⁶⁹ were the Canlaon City National High School Buildings, a bus and jeepney terminal, a two-story public market, the Training Center for Sustainable Agriculture, a market stall for diverse business classification, a pension house with social hall, the Crisis Intervention Center for Battered Women and Abused Children, the CSWD Office with Day Care Center, a dormitory for Indigent Students, the Malward and Home for the Aged, development of the City Park, and the concreting of barangay roads. This time, Cardenas' Medium-Term Development Plan was based on poverty-reduction policies. Its primary goal was to carry out rural and urban development projects. Purchasing eighteen or more hectares of land southeast of Mabigo at Panubigan has altered Canlaon City's image. It has seen consistent growth and serves as a broader foundation for commercial,

residential, institutional, transportation, and agro-industrial development.⁷⁰

A 1995 City Development Plan was prepared and proposed to advance project motivations and program accomplishments. As a result, it prolonged and maintained the city's development. The Barrio Development Councils, responsible for planning and putting forward projects for the barangay, were a part of it. The City Planning and Development Office was tasked with compiling all the planned projects, and the Department Heads or Chiefs of the City government were tasked with reporting the ongoing and completed projects.⁷¹ It allowed the general populace the opportunity to engage in governance, letting the existing administration know of the demands and necessities of the constituents before acting on them to raise the standard of living of the *Canlaonhons*.

Three commercial centers - Uptown, Midtown, and Downtown - were established with functions beneficial not only to Canlaonhons but also to the people of Negros. Infrastructure projects were undertaken, and new routes were established to connect rural and urban areas. Geographically and socioculturally, these new structures nurtured and fueled the city's growth.⁷²

In honor of a great man who dedicated his life to the development and improvement of the City and in recognition of his leadership and success in making a difference,⁷³ the Local School Board recommended the renaming of the Canlaon City High School to Jose B. Cardenas Memorial

High through Resolution No. 7 Series of 2001. It was unanimously approved as Ordinance No. 2 Series of 2002.

As a result of the constituents' mandate, Mayor Jesus M. Eleccion now has the faith and trust of the city as a result of his victory in the 1998 elections with a majority of the vote. His government's focus is on continuing the development initiatives started by the previous administration, with a particular emphasis on the sustained provision of infrastructure support services, including road networks to improve accessibility to goods, goods, and services and the mobility of agricultural products.⁷⁴

A twenty percent increase in the Development Fund's Infrastructure Appropriation was made in 1998. These resources were employed to build multipurpose pavements, water supply lines, basketball courts, health facilities, barangay halls, daycare facilities, waiting sheds, development barangay sites, comfort rooms, street lighting, and barangay road restoration. Additionally, the appropriation budget increased by more than P 3 million, which can be attributed to the administration's competent management of its income and expenses.⁷⁵

The city is continuing to advance and develop in the vibrant commercial districts and the rural areas that are essential to the city's holistic development plans. The city reported the following infrastructure developments: the construction of the Pension House Annex, the national highway to Mabini and Quezon Streets, the sidewalks along Exodus Avenue,

and the concreting of the city's roads and drainage systems.⁷⁶ Additionally, the opening of leasers' stalls at the bus and jeepney terminals has made the traveling public and vehicle operators more comfortable. A two-story public market was completed nearby, offering space for categorizing and trading items. The Uptown Vegetable Trading Post established cold storage facilities for vegetables the following year, and Barangay Panubigan established post-harvest storage facilities for rice and corn.⁷⁷ Programs met the underprivileged farmers' demands by providing them with a way to use governmental facilities that might boost their output, quadruple their income, and give them easy access to commercial hubs within the city. Because of all these infrastructure developments and their observable effects, progress in the city can constantly be seen.

In 1999, the Vallehermoso-Canlaon-La Castellana road project was finished, and it enhanced not only the number of investors offering the city new cash streams. More sources of income were found to equate to more revenues and resources available for other projects that promote advancement.⁷⁸ Services such as maternal and child care, dental care, and environmental sanitation had been provided, and the City Health Office also continued to provide financial aid for medical bills and free medicines to the needy.⁷⁹ The public should appreciate the coordinated efforts to advance the city's goals and ensure their sustainability. For Floriano Dael:

"The completion of the

Vallehermoso - Canlaon - La Castellana road project in 1999 opened new doors for investors and diversified income streams, enabling the city to fund projects that promote progress. From improved healthcare services, including maternal and childcare, dental care, and environmental sanitation, to financial aid and free medicines for the less fortunate, the city's coordinated efforts showcase a commitment to advancing its goals and ensuring a sustainable future. Gratitude is owed to those who contributed to the city's growth and well-being."⁸⁰

Canlaon City in the 21ST Century

Judith B. Cardenas' political career did not begin like that of other politicians in Canlaon City, where one starts at the bottom of the political hierarchy and gradually works his way to the top. Before becoming Mayor, Judith B. Cardenas was the simple wife of Jose B. Cardenas. All of that changed with one event in Canlaon's history. On the fateful day of April 27, 2001, Jose B. Cardenas, a mayoral candidate in the May 2001 election, and his first councilor Hon. Jessica B. Cardenas (younger sister of Hon. Jose B. Cardenas), were ambushed at Sitio Pinamintigan in Barangay Budlasan by lawless elements, which the NPA later admitted as the responsible proponents despite suspicions that they were politically motivated. Hospicio Condez Jr., Telesforo Fajardo, Calvin Neri, and Ricardo Oca were also killed on the

spot. It was a day of mourning for the people of Canlaon because they had lost a great political leader.⁸¹ In his bid for mayorship, the late Hon. Jose B. Cardenas was succeeded by Judith B. Cardenas. The Canlaon people expressed their ire in the May 14, 2001 elections when they overwhelmingly supported the widow of the late Hon. Jose B. Cardenas.⁸²

Significant initiatives were also carried out in 2001: the construction of the road that connects Mabini Street to Panubigan, the renovation of the City Children's Park in partnership with the tourism office, the Old Cultural Center, and the market grounds; the development of a new landfill site, and the improvement of the access road for waste disposal, both of which are currently under negotiation; the site development of the Canlaon City Cultural and Sports Center, construction of an additional Uptown Trading Center, the Market Grounds Improvement Project and Expansion Site, the Aguinaldo Street Consolidation Project, and City Health Office Phase.⁸³

There was also the development of the Water System in the twelve barangays, the construction of the City health office (phase II) and the Farm to Market road at sitio Tabalogo, Malatanglad, and Oyangan, all in Barangay Budlasan, and the concreting of Moreta Rivera-OISCA road in barangay Lumapao.⁸⁴ All of these initiatives continued to push the city toward development in the span of nine years by investing in infrastructure development once more.

After winning the election in

2010, Mayor Clerigo upgraded the city's infrastructure and enhanced its fundamental services for its residents which included the Midtown and Downtown public markets, LGU water supply system, and concreting of farm-to-market roads as well as the establishment of a Tertiary School and Livestock Auction market, development of an integrated mini-hydro power plant, irrigation dam, and inland tourist destination resort. In addition, pre/post-harvest facilities and sanitary landfill were established, and equipment were obtained. The mayor also concentrated on enhancing economic services to generate revenues for the city and raise family incomes among the city's laborers.⁸⁵

Projects and programs initiated eventually helped and boosted farmer production by providing them with high-yielding seeds, fertilizers, and chemicals. In some ways, these services are provided to ensure the productivity of the city's agricultural industry, which is the backbone of its economy. The livestock dispersal program provided farmers with livestock to raise and sell. The construction of water-impounding supplies and rehabilitation of irrigation canals has provided farmers with easy access to running water for their vegetation.⁸⁶ The private sector was also encouraged to establish businesses and commercial institutions. This project develops the city's skill-oriented industry by identifying native products for improved production and creating marketing links. Skilled workers are now established and have connections in markets throughout the Negros

province.⁸⁷ Secondary high schools in Masulog and Malaiba were founded, and final documents for the secondary school in Bayog and primary schools in Upper Mananawin and Upper Malaiba were submitted to the Department of Education. Finally, the Office of the Local School Board repaired and maintained existing school buildings.⁸⁸

Financial assistance has also been provided to less fortunate constituents who are confined in Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital and Canlaon District Hospital to ensure that they receive the proper care they deserve. The health agency's personnel has been increased to provide adequate and efficient health care, and the increase in personnel is also attributed to the construction of new Health Centers in barangays Masulog and Budlasan. Finally, the city government has purchased two new ambulances to supplement the services of the City Health Office and Canlaon City District Hospital.⁸⁹

AMayor Clerigo considered the city's financial backbone as a significant income stream. To secure funding for ongoing projects, he increased local taxes and existing charges, creating a surplus of funds. Under his leadership, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Canlaon City was honored with the Seal of Good Housekeeping Award for two years in a row (2010-11), alongside receiving a total of twenty million pesos from the Local Government Support Fund. This milestone has effectively bolstered the resources available for various programs and projects within Canlaon City.⁹⁰

Population History

The population growth of Canlaon City over the years is evident from the data provided in Table 1. From 1948 to 2020, the population increased significantly from 15,874 to 58,822, representing a growth of 42,948 people for 72 years. In the census conducted in 2020, the city's population continued to experience a positive growth rate of 1.62%, indicating an increase of 4,313 people compared to the previous population figure of 54,509 in 2015. The steady population growth suggests that Canlaon City has been attracting residents and experiencing development and progress over the years. This demographic trend could have implications for various aspects of the city, such as infrastructure, services, and the overall socio-economic landscape.

Table 1. *Population Growth of Canlaon City from 1948 to 2020.*

Census date	Population	Growth rate
1948 Oct 1	15,874	–
1960 Feb 15	22,884	3.27%
1970 May 6	23,598	0.30%
1975 May 1	29,152	4.33%
1980 May 1	28,785	-0.25%
1990 May 1	37,165	2.59%
1995 Sep 1	41,334	2.01%
2000 May 1	46,548	2.58%
2007 Aug 1	50,208	1.05%
2010 May 1	50,627	0.30%
2015 Aug 1	54,509	1.42%
2020 May 1	58,822	1.62%

Source: PhilAtlas.com

City Income (2009-2016)

The dataset covers eight fiscal years, revealing a generally increasing trend in annual regular income over this period. While the overall trend shows an increase, there are fluctuations in the regular yearly income. Some years experience significant gains, while others see decreases in revenue. As shown in Table 2, 2012 shows a considerable drop in income by -15.28%, which could indicate specific economic challenges that affected the payment during that fiscal year. The data shows consecutive years with increasing income, such as 2010 to 2011, 2013 to 2014, and 2014 to 2015. Despite fluctuations, the overall trend indicates that the revenue grew steadily over the years, except for the sharp decrease in 2012.

Table 2. *Canlaon City Income form 2009 to 2016*

Fiscal Year	Annual Regular Income	Change
2009	239,567,016.89	–
2010	262,811,929.70	9.70%
2011	293,110,881.38	11.53%
2012	248,322,282.60	-15.28%
2013	263,546,408.30	6.13%
2014	296,668,817.28	12.57%
2015	340,374,313.47	14.73%

Source: PhilAtlas.com

The establishment and growth of the city in the years that followed were due to the harmonious relationships and cooperation of institutions.⁹¹ This move validates Talcott Parsons' Social Systems Theory, which states that

the development of social systems depends on the functional imperatives - adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency - that exist in Canlaon City.

Essentially, underpinned by 'adaptation,' the municipal government, under the close supervision of the provincial and national governments, identified the resources available for establishing a municipality: the current juridical territory, human capital, natural resources, and the appropriation of the initial budget to defray operation costs.

Administrators then 'achieved the goal' by establishing the municipality through an executive order and a republic act, with proper support from national and local governments. The city was established as the first city in northern Negros Oriental.

'Integration' became apparent later when the local government continued to implement programs and projects, build infrastructures, establish revenue collection sources, and provide necessary facilities for health, education, and public services, among others, to deliver what is due to its constituents.

Finally, 'latency' occurs when social, political, and economic accomplishments are intertwined between social units such as the government, school, economy, church, and family. The establishment and growth of Canlaon City as a progressive city were predicated on the government's mandate to provide welfare to the people in close relationship and cooperation with the Department of Education, which benefited from government programs,

and the public and the church, which are direct beneficiaries of the city's constant social, political, and economic accomplishments.

Conclusion

This historical narrative seeks to retell and analyze Canlaon City's establishment and development from 1850 to 1947 as a barrio of the Municipality of Vallehermoso, to being a separate Municipality of Canlaon from 1947 to 1967, and finally to becoming the City of Canlaon from 1967 to the present.

This paper confirms the Social Systems Theory in its audacious attempt to reconstruct the city's local history, manifested as a byproduct of harmonious relationships between institutions. It also demonstrated the social accomplishments in health care, education, and public services. Furthermore, political victories in the form of infrastructure projects and achievements through established sources of revenue collection and increased city income all contributed to the development of Canlaon City, both directly and indirectly. The city administrations' active governance met the constant needs of institutions such as the family, school, and church. It thus resulted in social, political, and economic achievements made possible by the harmonious interdependence of the various functional imperatives in a social system.

The study covered the years 1850 to 2019, and few primary documents are available, particularly in the early days

of the Municipality's formation. Archival data from the early 1960s and 1970s are remarkably few, and most significant interviewees are either diseased or need help remembering the previous municipality.

Another historical account of Canlaon should be established in the context of social history. Finally, studies based on this framework are feasible and highly recommended.

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II. LIST OF RESPONDENTS

- Bautista, Belen – Teacher III (Jose B. Cardenas Memorial National High School)
- Bautista, Isidro Jr. – former city mayor of Canlaon City (1970 to 1986)
- Cardenas, Judith B. – former city mayor of Canlaon City (2001 to 2010)
- Clerigo, Jimmy Jayme L. – incumbent City mayor of Canlaon City
- Dael, Floriano S. – Department Head, Human Resource Management Office

Lamis, Hector – Businessman, Farmer
Lumogdang, Rosario E. – retired
Government Employee