

Zanjas (from the Spanish word *zanja*, meaning "ditch" or "canal") are resource management institutions in the Ilocos region. Discover the practices of centuries-old sustainable agricultural societies from the book *The Zanjas of Ilocos: Cooperative Irrigation Societies of the Philippines* by José Rivera.

JOSÉ A. RIVERA
**THE ZANJERAS
OF ILOCOS**

Cooperative Irrigation Societies
of the Philippines

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JOSÉ A. RIVERA is an internationally known scholar of community irrigation systems. He is a Research Associate at the Center for Regional Studies, University of New Mexico, and Professor Emeritus in the School of Architecture and Planning where he taught courses in rural development. His research interests include the study of traditional water management from a comparative perspective with a focus on governance and social organization. Field work sites have included the Southwestern United States, Baja California Sur in Mexico, Peru, Valencia and Murcia in Spain, and the Ilocos region of northern Luzon.



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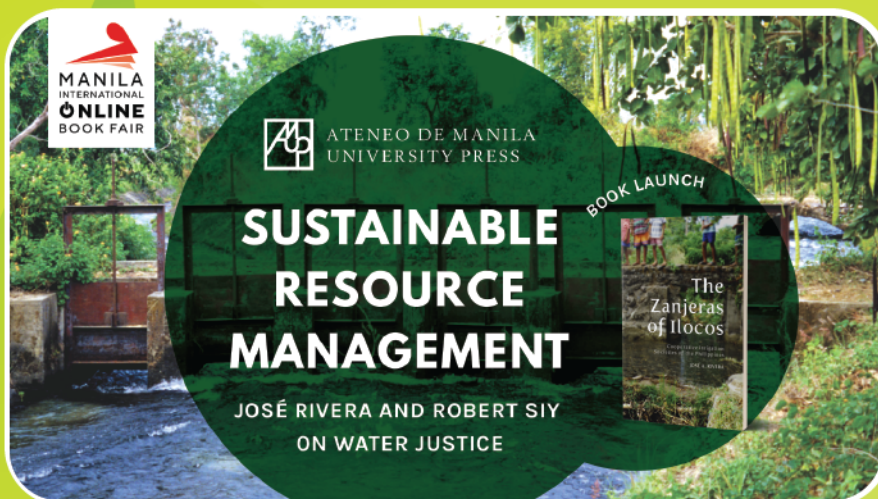
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About the Book

Zanjas are resource management institutions that have endured for centuries in the Ilocos region of northern Luzon. By most accounts, these cooperative irrigation societies emerged during the Spanish regime when Augustinians were deployed to congregate indigenous populations into pueblos, convert them to Christianity, and raise tributes for the Crown. Zanjas emerged from a blending of two traditions: the Iberian model of irrigation and zanjera practices that involved water-for-land

exchanges with landowners and atar-holdings to distribute shares among the members. Like other farmer-managed irrigation systems in Southeast Asia and globally, zanjas are self-governed, long enduring, and serve as exemplary models of sustainable agriculture. They have met the test of time, but will zanjas survive under new complexities that result from urbanization, economic modernity, and increased vulnerabilities due to global effects of climate change? The book explores these challenges and proposes actions that governmental bodies can undertake to strengthen the adaptive capacity of zanjas and other irrigation communities around the world.



Watch the Book Launch

Listen to sustainable mobility advocate Robert Siy discuss the zanjas with international scholar of community irrigation systems and author José A. Rivera.



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