

The Use of Indigenous Institutions as an Approach to Rural Development: A Case of an Upland Community

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The renewed advocacy of the indigenization ideology to replace conventional approaches to development has now become a popular declaration in developing countries. It emphasizes the human and social goals of development as spelled out in the constitutions of most developing countries. Assuming the complexity of the term indigenization and the process that it entails in dealing with development, the study elucidates on the concept and the process by focusing on the indigenous institutions as an alternate approach to rural development. The indigenous pudon and pangu institutions of the upland community of Kalinga in Northern Luzon are particularly selected as cases to show some significant characteristics of indigenization in the light of the need to stimulate further considerations of alternative approaches to and policies on rural development.

Introduction

This study analyzes the viability of indigenous institutions as an approach to rural development. The *pangu* (economic organization) and the *pudon* (peace pact) institutions of Kalinga, Northern Luzon are selected as case studies not only because of their highly indigenous characteristics and their meaning-giving role to the lifestyle of the Kalinga community but also because of the familiarity of the subject matter to the writer who is a native of the Kalinga community.

This paper argues the need to stimulate further discussion and analysis on alternative approaches to rural development among which is indigenization or indigenous institutions. At this point in history when Third World countries are in search of development alternatives to improve the life conditions of the rural poor, it is deemed appropriate to examine the potentials of indigenous institutions in the development process.

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Concepts of Indigenization and Indigenous Institutions*

In this study, indigenous institutions are defined as living (meaning-giving) traditions encompassing genuine beliefs and customary practices, forged with socio-cultural values that are responsive to human needs. So closely interwoven are indigenous institutions with the structure of society that they become virtually the dynamic and unifying principles of fulfilling various functions—economic, political, sociocultural—that preserve the general social order. Steeped in tradition for generations, indigenous institutions strongly bind community life through shared goals into a cohesive structure.

This definition is based on the doctrine of indigenization which encourages a return to authentic values and traditions which have shaped for many generations the religious, social and national life of the people, a rediscovering of the cultural genius of the people which are identified as truly their own. In a similar formulation, indigenization means

coming to our understanding and appreciation of those values—that are distinctively the group's own rather than those that have been borrowed from others or, still worse, imposed on the group by others. It has to do with genuineness and authenticity; it has also to do with going in the directions that the group itself chooses as most appropriate and natural for it.¹

The term “indigenization” first became current in Africa but confined only to rhetorical circles. Its significance and relevance to development was recognized during the 1950's and 1960's when it evolved first as a movement among social scientists of the Third World countries. In its early formulation, proponents of the movement questioned the limitations of the growth-model strategy of Western development being followed in the developing countries. In agriculture and rural development, possession of conventional technological knowledge was not enough to achieve overall economic development, particularly in the economic and social transformation of rural areas. This had to be buttressed with knowledge of some socio-cultural factors such as family and village organizations, values and norms of people.²

Finding fault and dissatisfaction with conventional models of development, indigenization became a “revolt against domination of Western concepts, theories and methodologies which are decried as unsuitable and irrelevant in the Asian context.”³ Indigenization calls for a new self-awareness

*For a detailed treatment of the concept of indigenization, please refer to *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Special Issue, Vol. XXVIII, Nos. 1 & 2, (January 1984).

for the purpose of exploring new paradigms, theories and concepts that are relevant in understanding human societies.⁴ This imperative is inspired by the need to liberate the Third World from too much dependence on borrowed models in order to give significance to development within historico-cultural roots that signify self-pride, self-respect, self-identity and self-reliance.⁵ Clearly, indigenization rejects the colonial consciousness which has long conditioned the intellectual framework of Third World countries in their desire to develop. However, this attitude does not necessarily mean the rejection of what is foreign or Western per se. Rather, the process of indigenization throws off the overlay of foreign elements that prevent the indigenous culture from developing and flourishing in accordance with its own dynamism and tendencies.⁶ Instead of assuming it as a replacement to conventional approaches, indigenization encourages, as an alternative, the proper blending of both indigenous and western or foreign approaches and strategies towards a more comprehensive model, with the national level as the focal point of this process.⁷ This "proper blending" process becomes the methodology of the indigenization approach.

In radical terms, the ideology of indigenization makes what is indigenous the master and initiator of the blending process. The western culture or technology sets its base in the national or indigenous culture where the former's appropriateness and suitability for application in the local area are critically examined by the latter. This idea has been similarly conceived as crucial in the conscious pursuit of rural development goals.⁸ Understandably, indigenization involves the construction of development paradigms that are distinct from those of the conventional models. The distinction comes from the former's own institutional capabilities and resources that reflect the world views, experiences and problems of the people.⁹ Put in another way, indigenization constitutes a revolution for relevance addressed against intellectual imperialism and politico-economic domination by the developed countries which have consistently obstructed the achievement of equity and social justice in rural societies.¹⁰ It must be stressed that indigenization is a learning process which emerges from the realization of developing countries that they are not only capable of self-development but can also learn from the limitations of foreign models.¹¹

In rural development, the commitment to indigenize is to launch a direct attack on mass poverty. This concern has been emphasized in the dynamic re-examination, re-thinking and re-definition of the content, focus and institutional arrangements of development, giving substantial attention to socio-cultural specifications.¹² Cultural identity, self-reliance and certain forms of authenticity are now called for as factors in development. It is argued that there is the "need to add to the patterns of analysis, a new dimension of social concern" of development.¹³ Expressed in stronger terms, attention is called to the discovery of development approaches that

would focus on "the return of man to the center of the development stage."¹⁴ As the central focus of development, man is to be proclaimed as both the subject and object of development, measured not only in terms of the GNP index, but also in view of promoting social justice, quality of life and welfare.¹⁵

With the thrusts of rural development being as they are in the Third World countries, indigenization lays heavy emphasis on social and human factors since the human and social dimensions of rural development have not traditionally been accorded due importance. The development process must be in line with and within the level of the people to be developed. By definition, "development is exactly what the word implies, a blossoming of what formerly existed. It is not imposition of alien forms into a local situation that leaves the people without understanding of their participation."¹⁶ The entire process of rural development is, therefore, carried out only through the inter-relationships of people. Its first and foremost concern is the promotion of active and meaningful participation of those to be developed in any phase of development.¹⁷ Participation referred to here is an essential feature of rural development. It makes people aware of what tasks or support to provide for, and the benefits to expect from the planning and implementation stages. This is exactly the significance of indigenization, making social goal as the dominant priority as opposed to a situation wherein a disproportionate share of the functions of rural development and its benefits is pre-empted and siphoned off by aliens.¹⁸

Pudon and Pango as Indigenous Institutions

An examination of the indigenous institutions of the upland community of Kalinga to show some of these characteristics of indigenization will be discussed in three themes, namely: first, to identify the criteria for evaluating their performance on the basis of the specific goals and priority given to various goals; second, to measure the performance of these indigenous institutions in terms of their responsiveness and effectiveness to the general welfare of the Kalinga community; and lastly, to examine their policy implications in relation to national strategy for rural development. Specifically, this includes a brief discussion of the provision for community participation, their capability to mobilize local resources for productive purposes, and their effectiveness in delivering benefits. This framework is derived from seminar on *The Role of Rural Organizations in Rural Development in Asia of Asian and Pacific Development Administration Center (APDAC)* in 1978.¹⁹ The discussion of rural organizations and rural development is limited to the Upland Community of Kalinga-Apayao.

Formerly a sub-province of Mountain Provinces (which comprised then of Apayao, Bontoc, Ifugao, Benguet), Kalinga became a separate province in 1902. On June 19, 1966, Kalinga was merged with the subprovince of

Apayao by virtue of Republic Act (RA) No. 4695 to form the province of Kalinga-Apayao. The province is bounded on the North by Ilocos Norte and Cagayan, on the East by Cagayan and Isabela; on the South by Mt. Province (formerly Bontoc); and on the West by Abra and Ilocos Norte. With a land area of 7,047.6 square kilometers, Kalinga-Apayao ranks 12th largest of the country's 67 provinces, with a total population of 136,249, of which 99.7 percent are native born.²⁰ Most of the terrains are uniformly rugged, mountainous and hilly with a maximum elevation of 3,000 ft. above sea level and some 2,000 ft. below the top range of the mountain wet-rice terraces.²¹

Generally, Kalinga-Apayao has a relatively warm climate and heavy wet season, which is appropriate for agriculture. This is why hills and valleys are covered with vegetation; and wherever there is relatively level land, it is intensively cultivated. The average annual rainfall is 2,500 mm. The peak rainfall period is July to November. August is the wettest month with an average rainfall of 500 mm. The average annual temperature is about 80 degrees F and warmest in May with temperature of 85° F.²²

A general understanding of the Kalingas and Apayaos (except for the half of the sub-province of Apayao in its Northern Part)²³ should evolve from the processes of adaptive techniques on the rice culture that developed during the earlier history of the province. In fact, the culture in Kalinga, so to speak, can be summarized as "rice culture, because from the cultivation and production of rice arose the socio-political systems and other aspects of the local culture, like religious beliefs and practices."²⁴

The cultivation and production of rice is the primary source of survival which up to this day, has characterized the area's predominantly subsistence economy. In fact, what actually uplifted the province's way of life, and what transformed its ecological configurations was the introduction of a technology based on rice. Rice production occurs in two stages. The first is the *uma* system in Kalinga term, or better known as *kaingin* system in other parts of the Philippines. Anthropologists describe the *kaingin* system as the mountain rice swiddening on the stage of dry rice shifting cultivation characterized by slashing and burning the plant life of hills or mountains. The other stage of rice production called *payaw* in Kalinga, is the wet rice terracing technique otherwise known as the paddy rice farming. The *payaw* is the most effective means of providing a continuous and permanent supply of rice for the whole of Kalinga. The southern Kalingas, particularly along the Chico River belt have developed a technique of rice technology, namely, the wet-rice agriculture.²⁵ The strategic topography and the fertile soil, which the Chico River provides is suitable for growing rice and, therefore, conducive for wet-rice agriculture. In contrast, in the North-Western Kalingas along the Sultan River Valley, rice is grown almost solely in *kaingin*.²⁶ Their economic resources are supplemented by their preoccupation with beneficial trade relations with lowland communities.

The economic process, that is, the development of the rice agriculture technology, followed closely the genesis of socio-political organization. The Kalingas who were originally food gatherers, and fishing and hunting groups, were roaming bands of close-kin. At this stage, the loci of political authority were the respective family heads, who governed and guided the bands to places where food might be found. At the stage of dry-rice cultivation, these same close-kin bands increased in number and settled down in scattered kaingin plots of mountain swiddens. In their semi-sedentary life, the same family heads constituted themselves into some kind of council of elders. This council exercised the political authority of deciding for the group where they should settle down for the next sojourn. Spatial or residential permanency and stability of sources of subsistence came only during the stage of wet-rice cultivation. This gave rise to the aggregation of the formerly semi-sedentary bands into a settlement forming a cluster community called *ili* (village) in the Kalinga language. Governed by the authority and leadership of various kinship heads or *papangat* (leader, *pangat* in the singular) constituting some form of council of elders, the *ili* was self-subsistent, autonomous and sovereign in its decisions. Esteban Magannon, a prominent anthropologist and a pure Kalinga native himself, has described the structure and form of the Kalinga *ili* in the following terms.

The Kalinga *ili* or village consists of the *ili* or community itself, the paddy fields scattered over the nearby mountain valleys and plots of gradient flat lands or hilly nooks, the mountain swiddens and vegetable gardens on the side of the mountains and hills farther distant from the community, the fishing and hunting grounds of the tribe, the pasture lands where the tribe tends its cows and carabaos, and the forest reserves of the tribe. This is the universe of the Kalinga. The limits of this universe extend horizontally and vertically as far as the Kalinga can see and as far as his two feet can carry him. It is indeed a very small world. However, the Kalinga feels happy, safe and secure in this small universe. In short, it is his home. And for him that is all that matters.²⁷

These *il-ili* (plural form of *ili*) are found on river banks, slope gradients, hill and mountain sides. Although these *il-ili* are self-subsistent, autonomous and sovereign in themselves, they have established trade, commercial and diplomatic relationships between and among themselves, through the inter-*ili* peace pacts system called *pudon* in Kalinga.

Socially, the Kalinga community is based on strong kinship relations. The kinship group is the social unit among Kalingas. The kinship structure comprises a grouping of families and clans which embraces a grouping of relatives from eight pairs of great-great-grandparents ranging from first to third degree of relations. Then, there is the bigger kinship community in the village level formed by a functional aggrupation of family and clan kinship groups. The larger social grouping is the Kalinga community which is characterized by strong consensus inter-*ili* or inter-village relationships. The first two forms may be classified under the principle of tribal social organizations,

while the third form may belong to the territorial or regional organizational principle.

Preservation of the social order is considered as a primordial tradition as it is a commandment communicated and taught by *Kabuniyan*, the Kalinga Supreme Deity. As a functional structure, it embraces all of the economic, political, socio-cultural and religious factors that characterize the life of the Kalinga community and its individual members. Ultimately, this goal is what the law and customs and their (Kalingas') way of life must serve in order to become meaningful and relevant.

It is a generally accepted belief by the Kalingas that every member according to his ability and capacity based on his social standing must contribute to the achievement of a perfect cosmic community. The social stratification comprises two major classes: *baknang* and *lawa*. The more prosperous are referred to as the *baknang class* and the less prosperous, the *lawa class*. Esteban Magannon observes that the social structure cannot properly be understood without an appreciation of the Kalinga man's life. According to Magannon, the Kalinga is, first of all, a member of the family, a kinship group and the village community. The organizational bases of his membership are birth and sanguinal affinity. By his membership, the Kalinga not only shares the biological or genetical virtues and defects of his ancestral line, but he also takes on himself the social and political responsibilities, obligations and liabilities and any other commitment which he owes to the community, other tribes and to society beyond Kalinga land. Each Kalinga, whether he belongs to the *baknang* class or the *lawa* class is expected to contribute to the general welfare of the Kalinga community.²⁸ This is a living tradition in Kalinga where every member of the community is admitted through the ceremonies and expressed rituals of the Kalinga initiation rite.²⁹ Succinctly, the Kalinga social life takes place within a set or rigidly ordained relationships defined by tradition that revolves around the kinship system. In its broader forms, meaning, inter-village community and village community perspectives, the kinship system operates in the *pudon* and *pangu* institutions.

The *pudon* (peace pact) is the unit of political government in Kalinga. In his observation among the various cultural communities of the Philippines, Franklin Roy Barton believed that Kalinga possesses one of the most developed political organizations as demonstrated by the *pudon*.³⁰ Francisco Billiet shares the same belief that the *pudon* is specifically a Kalinga development.³¹

The *pudon* has, as its principle of organization, an original blood tie entered into by two lineages or tribal villages. In its definition, the *pudon* includes, as a major requirement, the territory referred to as the *ili* (village). In the treaty of agreement, the two contracting (*ili*) parties define in a set of provisions their territorial boundaries, the extent of trade and commerce

between them, the respective political and social obligations towards each other, and an inventory of punishable crimes and their corresponding penalties. To the Kalingas, the *pudon* is a sacred pact, in which any violation of it or any infringement of its provision must be severely punished. A Kalinga would put it: any violation or infringement is like "eating one's flesh." The *mangdon attey pudon* (holders of the *pudon*) are the principal brothers in the kinship bond established between the two *ili*. The *pudon* holders are either the *papangat* (village leaders) or prospective potential leaders in their respective village communities. Entrusted by their respective villages with the authority to enforce the provisions of the *pudon*, the *pudon* holders, together with the council of elders, are vested with strong authority to decide, arbitrate, adjudicate and punish violators of the *pagta* (Constitution of the *pudon*). The rationale of the *pudon* is based on the promotion of social order which is consistently emphasized in its (*pudon's*) social goals and the dynamics of leadership capable of carrying out such goals.

As conceived by the Kalingas, the social order governs man's existential structure which constitutes the harmonious co-existence of man and his spiritual world, meaning, man does not live only in space and time in the community with his fellowmen, but with *Kabuniyan*,^{3 2} the deities and dead ancestors. In fact, the spatial and the temporal divisions make the world order, which do not only puts everything in its proper place but also facilitates harmonious interactions between man and the deities.^{3 3}

This world view or the cosmic order is believed to have been communicated by *Kabuniyan* and is therefore a commandment that the Kalinga man is obliged to live with. To every Kalinga, this concept of social order is the central philosophy and rationale of his existence. In real life, it is a world that is meaningful and relevant, a home of happiness where all forms of justice prevail. It is where man is bound, as a religious duty and political responsibility, to transcend the village community life. As a member of the community, by virtue of an initiation rite, an individual in his earlier months or years is introduced and reinstated into an adult community and into the world of spiritual and socio-cultural and political values. Since time immemorial, the Kalingas believed that initiating the individual into this world is a living tradition that is closely interwoven with the structure of Kalinga society. Hence, it becomes virtually the dynamic and unifying principle of fulfilling vital political and social functions.^{3 4}

It may be argued that the promotion of the social order and the dynamics of Kalinga leadership has contributed significantly to the preservation of the indigenous identity of the Kalingas as a strong political and social community. Aside from being identified with social goals or the preservation of social order, Kalinga leadership is tied to the social structure. By virtue of his initiation, the Kalinga man becomes a citizen of a kinship group, of

the village, of the Kalinga community as a whole, and of his immediate neighboring communities (Bontocs, Ifugaos, Tinggians, Ibanags, Isnegs) with whom he shares common cultural traditions and customs. As a citizen of these social aggrupations, he is called to conform to the functional patterns of the social structure.

The ultimate function of the social structure requires the mutual responsibilities and commitments of both individual kinship member and the community as a whole towards the promotion of the social order. As a functional structure, it embraces all the political, socio-cultural and religious factors that govern the life of the Kalinga community and its individual members. Ultimately, the achievement of such goal is what makes some existence meaningful and relevant. Within the structure, every member according to his ability and capacity must contribute towards the attainment of a perfect cosmic community that is generally characterized by social equity and justice. Although the Kalinga social organization would indicate a social stratification, there is no such thing as more or lesser functions among the *baknang* class and the *lawa* class, in the same way that there is no rich or poor class attributes in Kalinga.³⁵

Similarly, it may be argued that wealth or economic prestige, or being a *baknang* is not always a criterion for assuming leadership. A *lawa* can also become a leader by virtue of his wisdom recognized by the community. In fact, wisdom is the source of power and authority of a Kalinga leader. A leader is believed to be wise when he has proven to have lived the true and authentic Kalinga way. This calls for the leader's sustained charismatic striving for knowledge on the Kalinga culture and tradition which he has to live faithfully by example.

Knowledge and example would, in turn, require one's loyalty to the powers of the teachings of *Kabuniyan* who is believed to have taught and made the Kalinga man understand how to live a good life. In the Kalinga tradition, a leader must possess in the highest and most excellent degree the moral qualities of self-discipline and self-respect, the virtues of generosity, honesty, trustworthiness and kindness and, above all, truth and justice. Moreover, the leader must display physical masculinity that makes him a brave warrior. Besides bravery and counts of human heads taken in battle (which are brought home and displayed for people to witness), the values of compassion and benevolence in battle are important attributes of a warrior among Kalingas. In other words, *Kabuniyan* taught man the commandments of authentic human existence. In actual life, the Kalinga leader uses his wisdom not to cause human injustice and unhappiness. According to the Kalingas, this constitutes the justification and rationale of a true leader, provided however, that he is totally committed to the preservation and promotion of the social order.

It is further recognized among the Kalingas that the leader must have the ability to alter the behavior of people in order to promote what is good for the community. This requires competence as a teacher or adviser, or councillor of tradition, and the power of the leader to settle social or tribal conflicts. Just like in formal education where skills are hard-earned, leadership skills in Kalinga are acquired through arduosity and endurance that begin from the family to his kinship groups, then to his village, then to the larger Kalinga community or beyond Kalinga to the national society. This is the reason why leadership among the Kalinga is a sacred responsibility, where a leader is privileged to carry all the burdens and consequences of his actions. The sacredness of leadership implies the following: first, the people have the power to mandate strong authority to the leader in the performance of his roles that will be taken as binding; second, all the pronouncements of the leader are rather more binding when they are orally said than put in writing;³⁶ third, leadership is legitimized, not through electoral processes but by consensus mandate to ensure accountability; and finally, leadership is not based on power but rather on strong authority.

In other words, individual members of the community who want to be recognized as village leaders and holders of the *pudon* must possess the above qualities and characteristics that best describe the dynamics of Kalinga leadership. While the *ili* is administered by the *papangat*, together with a council of elders, the inter-*ili* administration is assumed by the *mangdon attey pudon*. Both *papangat* and *mangdon attey pudon* are highly respected by the community because they speak with eloquence and wisdom. The community seeks their advice in times of trouble because their counsel conforms with fundamental customs. In both the administration of the *ili* and the inter-*ili* communities, the concept of leadership does not encourage the exercise of power which implies the use of force and coercion. By tradition, the concept of strong authority has governed the Kalinga leadership in the decision-making processes. Leadership is legitimized by fixed laws based on customs and traditions set by the people. To a certain extent, this is how the people participate in the decision-making and in the administration of the community.

In its function to preserve and promote the social order, the *pudon* has the following characteristics: first, the *pudon* functions perfectly within the Kalinga traditional social structure; second, it functions perfectly well within the environmental (territorial) sentimentality (within the Kalinga area) where it is originally and traditionally instituted. As such, any *pudon* that is transacted or contracted outside Kalinga may not work. Third, the *pagta* (provisions) of the *pudon* provide exclusive measures in all matters involving conflict settlements between the two contracting *ili* concerned. This means the *pudon* makes and works effectively only if it is made to

operate within a historical context, meaning, within the Kalinga traditional concepts and world views.

Obviously, the *pudon* is confined to the internal governance of the Kalinga society, and is so perfectly structured to respond to the general welfare of the Kalingas. Since its institution during pre-Spanish times, the *pudon* has proven to have preserved the political, social and economic stability of the Kalinga society. A key term in the *pudon* is the consensus to safeguard the indigenous identity of the Kalingas through the encouragement of strong unity among all Kalinga villages. This internal qualification implies the extreme difficulty of external factors for accommodation and integration without being subjected to traditional or customary control. It is recurrently recounted by scholars that the *pudon* practice proved invulnerable against Western colonization by the Spaniards and Americans and against potential exogenous factors that threatened the general social order of the area.

Attempts by the Spaniards, for example, to bring the province within the purview of Spanish central administration never succeeded, due to the fact that the whole network of inter-*ili-pudon* had been fully mobilized and accelerated at that time. The Kalinga tribes had effectively resisted Spanish attempts at subjugation and colonization. The early Americans who entered the province initially met the same strong opposition and resistance. Recognizing the difficulty of bringing them completely within the ambit of colonial rule, the Americans showed respect and understanding to the local culture and population. This was the reason why the Americans gradually established a foothold in the area.³⁷

The value of unity which is encouraged by the *pudon* operates more effectively when the internal security or the social order is threatened by an external factor. It functions in view of the Kalinga society as a whole. For example, the *pudon* provides that if village A is attacked by an outside (non-Kalinga) element, all villages from B to Z must join forces to fight that external element in defending village A. This was the experience during the Spanish and American colonial periods. At present this practice is concretely observed in the case of the proposed Chico River Dam Project in Kalinga. Villages A, B and C may be directly affected by the dam project by being submerged under dam waters. But by virtue of the *pudon*, villages D to Z also feel affected. Thus, the opposition to the dam project is not only confined to the three villages directly affected by the dam, but covers the whole Kalinga people.

Another key term embodied in the *pagta* of the *pudon* is the provision for maintaining peace and order in the Kalinga community. Aside from the provision for strong unity, general peace and order is an important factor in

promoting the social order. Peace and order conditions would provide the favorable environment for facilitating harmonious social and economic interactions among the villages. In fact, one of the reasons for the institution of *pudon* was to accelerate commerce and trade between villages. Besides, the exchange of goods and services among villages for productive purposes is also facilitated.

On the other hand, the breaking of the *pudon* would automatically mean the desecration of its sacred value. By consequence, the two contracting villages lose all the privileges formerly enjoyed by virtue of their *pudon* agreements. Both parties would not consider each other as blood brothers any more, but as potential enemies who might end up in tribal war. It is argued, however, that this practice is a dynamic element of the *pudon*, where more often than not it is a contributing factor in strengthening the *pudon* tradition. Historical experience would show that ruptures in the *pudon* are quickly settled with renewed fervor. Up to this day, the *pudon* remains a living tradition among the Kalingas. It goes without saying that without the *pudon* institution, there would be no true Kalinga as it exists today.

The other living tradition of kalinga is the *pangu* institution. Termed as the traditional economic organization of Kalinga, the *pangu* constitutes the core structure of the Kalinga economy. It focuses on the inter-relationships between the economy and other social institutions based on the kinship structure. The *pangu* is used also to describe the community cooperation or mutual help especially for providing labor and services needed at some stages of economic production, specifically in *padi* production. The underlying principle is that of giving help or services in the expectation of getting the same in return later on. Through this process, a network of reciprocal obligations exists in the village which act as a binding factor among the villagers and village members. The *pangu* especially in economic production mainly benefits the whole village unit. The dominant practice shows how land and other production factors are organized to meet the community's needs through the cooperative organizational process and egalitarian rules of production.

The *pangu* does not only refer exclusively to the manipulation of economic resources nor to the conventional flow of economic goods and services. Rather, the *pangu* gives importance to the inter-relationships between the social structure and economic activities. The relationships, for example, of people with one another in the processes of production, consumption, distribution and exchange are generally the expression of kinship ties and community solidarity. Among the *Kalingas*, the cooperative spirit, manifested in "communality" and "community" permeating economic processes is an expression of village community life. Most of the essential features of their economic organization depend mainly on the availability of land and its physical characteristics. This is where, aside from its sacredness, land is the most

valued property among the Kalingas because of their almost basic dependence on the land that gives continuity and meaning not only to economic production but also to the socio-cultural systems.

An important characteristic of the economic system in Kalinga is the organization of work which is derived from the need to live or to provide subsistence, the satisfaction in cooperative labor and conviviality, the division of labor and specialization, the pleasure and gratification of a reward and the drive for prestige. To the Kalinga, to live means to realize the concept of *matago*, "to be man is to work in order to exist." This means that the life of a Kalinga is a historical process that is lived in sweat and hard work, from beginning to end, from birth to death. He accepts such a life and lives more or less comfortably; then he feels happy and fulfilled. It is in this philosophy of life that one often hears him say, "Man has neither right to eat and drink nor to live if he does not love to work." The amount of work and the time or efforts spent are equally ascribed according to one's ability and capacity to do work, where everybody does his part to contribute towards economic fulfillment.

Cooperative work over individualism is generally the rule in economic production and in social activities. People cooperate in different groups according to the nature of work. Ordinarily, cooperative work involved members of a family and kin or community neighbors, working side by side in pursuing common agricultural activities and other tasks. The *pangu*, being a cooperative endeavor, is one of the most important work organizations. The basic work unit in the *pangu* is the family and kinship although it also embraces neighbors within the community and from the other villages. Inter-village *pangu* is what the *pudon* encourages for productive endeavors. In the *pangu*, a person works in order to fulfill a social obligation to the kinship group or family he or she belongs to, or to maintain prestige and social status. In practice, the *pangu* work group is much more stimulating and more emulating; thus it often produces better quality and more efficient work.

As an important aspect of the village economy, *pangu* is commonly practised during planting or harvesting in the *uma* or in the *payaw*. *Pangu* is also employed in the hauling of lumber from the forest, laying the foundation of a house and common activities that benefit the community.

Economic organization among the Kalingas is observed also in processes of exchange and consumption of goods and services that are done through gift-giving, barter, selling and buying of properties, and credit and loan practices. In all these economic activities, participation is open to everybody, whether one is a *baknang* or a *lawa*. Equal participation is the rule because it is a powerful bid for loyalty and cooperation for the promotion of village community welfare.

From the outset, it may be said then that the *pangu* in the Kalinga economy is perfectly structured within a framework that, first, provides opportunities for sharing in the products of labor, and second, strengthens effective ties among kin groups and village communities—both of which are aimed at promoting economic productivity and social stability.

Policy Implication of Indigenization on Rural Development

In drawing out policy implications on using indigenous institutions for rural development, there are some vital issues that should be further discussed and researched on. Evidently, in the foregoing discussion, there is today a growing awareness among development planners of the Third World on the value and significance of the doctrine of indigenization on development.

Indigenization has somehow contributed to the transformation of the colonially-based rural development process into a more pragmatic one. The experience of the last quarter of the century has shown particularly the critical role of socio-cultural factors in the development process which indigenization accords with utmost importance. As a result, human and social factors have been recognized as substantial inputs in the rural development equation whose output cannot exclusively be measured in terms of the economic calculus of the GNP and per capita growth rates. Indigenization, however, does not advocate the discarding of the quantitative dimension of development, but re-focuses it in order to give equal consideration to non-economic factors that seek to improve and uplift the quality of life of the rural poor.

Today, the inability of planners and administrators to anticipate socio-cultural problems during the planning and implementation stages is still evident. Frequently, planners of rural development make assumptions about village life and the rural poor which are not always tenable. For example, among planners, a widely held belief is that traditional village people are not likely to change and that they offer resistance to whatever plans made for their development.^{3 8} This study argues that in policy formulation and decision-making, resistance of people should be taken with the utmost seriousness; it should not be hastily explained as ignorance and superstition. The Kalinga people somehow resented this attitude displayed by some development agents to those Kalingas who actively reacted against the Chico Dam Project and other related rural development programs, like the *Masagana 99* technology and Family Planning. Neither can the unfavorable response of the people be interpreted as actions reflective of their failure to properly understand their own interest and the national development strategy. The people argue that if they are made to understand, instead, the superior wisdom of the programs at issue, vis-a-vis their local culture, then there is no reason for them not to start cooperating naturally.

It goes without saying that a call for serious understanding of local culture is an important point to consider in the formulation and analysis of related rural development policies. Among indigenous communities like Kalinga, knowledge and understanding of the dynamic processes of tradition and modernization is a significant criterion in determining the success or failure of rural development projects, especially government-initiated projects. In Kalinga, the traditional framework of meaning is still highly valued under strong stress of social conformity, while the traditional values of life are on the other hand, being undermined towards a selective process of adjustments and adaptation to some forces of modernization. In this regard, it is imperative for a planner to envisage a strategy appropriate to policy decision on rural development processes in indigenous communities.

It is further argued that poor planning and slow implementation of most rural development programs are due not only to the inadequate understanding of the village life but also to planners and administrators who have tended to minimize the significance of local culture in rural development planning and implementation.³⁹ It is assumed that this argument may be attributed to the absence of national development policies giving adequate and clear focus and emphasis on the socio-cultural dimension of rural development; or it is also possible that rural development planners and implementors possess biased attitudes towards the rural poor, especially traditional village people; or there is no methodology in understanding or knowing rural poor and their local culture.

These are just some of the many problems attributed to the conventional approaches to rural development which indigenization emphasizes to eliminate or at least minimize. It is a fact that the intimate knowledge of people and their culture remains the strength of indigenization. The question is, how can traditional socio-cultural, economic and political patterns be utilized to promote the goals of rural development? This question is closely related to the observation that rural development lies in its more circumstantial depiction of the nature of the social and cultural context within which development inevitably will have to take place.⁴⁰

It is in this strategy of development and rural development, for that matter, where the role of indigenous institutions and values as an approach may be put in perspective. It is said, for example, that

one of the most important policy questions in the introduction of social change and development at the local level is the problem of how traditional values and institutions can be harnessed to the purpose of development.⁴¹

In the case of the *pudon* and *pangu* institutions, they represent, in concrete forms, the nature and characteristics of the Kalinga culture. In understanding the Kalinga community, these institutions play a positive role,

particularly in their attempts to introduce social change and development. They are expressions of what constitute the Kalinga community. Indigenous institutions like the *pudon* and *pangu* tend to denigrate the significance of material well-being for human welfare. Aside from being sources of social control, the concern for more human processes of development is what makes these institutions relevant in terms of their social commitment. In speaking of development for this upland community, an understanding and knowledge of the *pudon* and *pangu* systems should become the first approach. In the description of these institutions, it was emphasized that the concept of participatory development is the key element in the community structure. Participatory development, as practised by the Kalinga, is regarded as the foundation of the Kalinga community. Operationally, it is the village leaders (*papangat*) and the holders of the peace pact (*mangdon attey pudon*) that hold and possess the highest power and authority in the governance of the community in terms of mobilizing the people in their capacity for active involvement in the decision-making process and in the allocation of resources. In this regard, the strong authority of the *papangat* and the *mangdon attey pudon* could be invoked to assist development programs in the area.

There had been attempts where the *pudon* and the *pangu* were invoked to help promote other fields of interest. This was observed in the area during the American period. The American government then followed a constructive administrative policy with particular attention paid to the special needs of the Kalinga population. This policy was evident during the administration of Walter Franklin Hale who, as governor of Kalinga (1906-1910), declared that his government was kind, just and fair, and that it was established to protect the Kalinga laws and property. His administration was committed to the settlement of peace and order among the warring tribes through the *pudon*, and to the acceleration of the cultivation of rice and planting of coffee trees through the *pangu* system. On its part, Hale's administration provided for iron tools to the cultivators then who were using wooden tools to construct rice terraces. This explained the collaborative efforts of the Americans and the Kalinga people in the general governance of the area at that time. If only this same approach had been applied in the introduction of the proposed Chico Project, the *Masagana 99* or rice agriculture and the Family Planning program, then there would have been no reason for the Kalinga people not to give support to these programs.

The Philippine Government has no doubt expressed its commitment to bring development to the rural areas and to promote rural development that conforms with the doctrine of indigenization (human and social development). The 1974-77 Development Plan, for example, states that "man remains the ultimate target of development; thus social development complements all other efforts of development." The 1978-82 Philippine Devel-

opment Plan further states that this commitment to human meaning of development should be realized by "promoting self-reliance among the most deprived groups to transform them from being mere recipients of economic benefits into becoming contributors to economic growth."⁴² This has been called the ultimate direction towards enabling communities in searching for, discovering and identifying opportunities, and utilizing resources for coping with common concerns.⁴³ Operationally, this direction means popular participation in development defined in terms of active involvement at all levels, and sharing not only of duties but also of power and privileges. This process is achieved first through coordinative mechanisms to serve as the communication link between the different politico-administrative structures and the people at the grassroots, and second, through government-sponsored rural organizations.

Nowhere in the Philippine Development Plan can you find, however, lines stating the utilization of indigenous institutions as a strategy or an alternative approach to promote rural development goals. Although the Plan has given new urgency to programs for self-reliance, this is far from being realized. This shortcoming is due to the fact that the rural development process is strongly structured and linked to politico-bureaucratic systems. One of the considerations for policy formulation and analysis is the role of indigenous institutions in eliminating such politico-bureaucratic elements in the development process.

The suggestion of this study to use indigenous institutions as an approach to rural development may follow the "partnership" concept stated by President Ferdinand Marcos where the role of the government is represented when the poor are organized to articulate their interest and to participate in government.⁴⁴ However, indigenization does not encourage the government as an organizer; rather, it should play the role of a stimulator in the process through the utilization of indigenous institutions. This brings out the major challenge of evolving or installing

a process in which people in local communities are made to realize that the capacity for change and improvement are in their hands, that they are capable of self-management and that collectively they can chart their future community life according to their desired directions.⁴⁵

A related question to this challenge: What about institutionalizing indigenous institutions as an approach to rural development?

Institutionalizing Indigenous Institutions in Rural Development

The need to institutionalize the use of indigenous institution as an approach to rural development calls for a rationale that deals with problems and solutions affecting the promotion of social development goals; the

objective of which is to enhance and insure the benefits of development to the rural poor. Oftentimes, the lack of institutionalization limits the social access of the poor to the decision-making process, and consequently, to their deprivation of service benefits due to the conventional "incremental policy development projects, to ensure their continuity and assure client of sustained attention to their needs."⁴⁷ In more explicit terms, "external linkages of the project are crucial to project life from planning to implementation as linkages with national and local political organizations and leaders or with influential parliamentary committees."⁴⁸ A study noted that linkage is a "more significant variable than autonomy in promoting rural development."⁴⁹

In this light, it can be said that institutionalization may lead to a constitutionally-based rural development planning and implementation, giving central value to understanding the nature of rural society and the considerable capacities of rural people as potential partners in national development efforts. In describing indigenous systems as an approach to community resource management, the narrow emphasis given by planners and policy makers to strictly technical and macroeconomic factors, and their neglect of institutional aspects of rural development⁵⁰ can be a paradox of contemporary development. The conviction that effective planning must be appropriately tailored to the constraints in rural areas cannot be underestimated. It is argued, for example,

that simple procedures and usable techniques do assist policy-makers and administrators in analyzing their problems but that the temptation to introduce even more complex requirements and measures, more elaborate models and more sophisticated analytical tools in many cases, simply paralyze activity.⁵¹

The traditional arguments that local cultures and traditions and indigenous system conflict with modern (development) values and technology and that most development planners and policy administrators have callous attitude on the relevance of these systems in the development process, are no longer plausible these days in view of the emergence of various studies on the indigenization ideology. The experiences of some developing countries in institutionalizing indigenous institutions in rural development programs/projects only show that indigenous technology and modern development technology can be very compatible.

In Malaysia, for example, one of the provisions for rural development efforts is to evolve a more participatory structure in the planning and implementation of rural development projects. The aim is to mobilize the active participation of the *Kampung* (village) community in the aggregation of grassroots needs and demands through the utilization of traditional rural institutions, like the *tolong menolong* which is a self-help or village cooperation and responsibility projects. The *tolong menolong* is a traditional mutual

work aid or cooperation among work parties which is still strongly practised by the *Kampung* communities. The voluntary cooperation and strong support provided led to the national government leadership's commitment to restructure the *tolong menolong* and other indigenous system into more viable economic institutional linkages and aids to rural development.⁵² The pattern of indigenization in Indonesia parallels that of Malaysia where the village people are integrated into the administrative planning process through the institutionalization of the *gotong royong*, similarly understood as a mutual assistance and cooperative workgroup. It normally involves activities related to the promotion of social welfare program focused on service delivery.

Taiwan's program on agricultural development is also known for its old indigenization policy. It was described as

the combination of its practical knowledge of local institutions, its attention to details, and its painstaking supervision of research and extension work that made the government so influential in guiding Taiwan's agricultural development.⁵³

Two prominent indigenous institutions play significant role in the country's progressive agricultural modernization, namely, the *nokai* and *pao-chia*. The *nokai* is a traditional farmers' association. *Chia* is a group of a dozen or more households which in turn are grouped into village units, called *pao*. These local traditional institutions provide the mechanism by which the government carries out extension programs. Their activities are given continuity through sustained research programs that have impressively generated innovative measures which are responsive to the needs of the grassroots farmers.

In the case of Thailand, the traditional pattern of governance which is described as a personalized organizational arrangement in the Thai bureaucracy is still a dominant element in the efficient administration of rural development.⁵⁴

In the Philippines, the call to institutionalize indigenous institutions remains a challenge. Evidently, there are only sporadic attempts at invoking the principle of some indigenous institutions. For example, the *Zanjera* has been recognized by the National Irrigation Authority (NIA) as a viable approach in winning the support and cooperation of Ilocano farmers in the construction of irrigation projects. The *Zanjera* is a traditional irrigation organization among Ilocano farmers. For many decades, the *Zanjera* has demonstrated its potentials in the managerial and technical maintenance of irrigation systems. At the present times, it is still strongly practiced among the Ilocano farmers in the Ilocos region, Cagayan, Isabela and Mindanao.

In the case of the Kalinga *pudon* institution, there has been little recognition on the part of some government agencies of its latent potentials for politically oriented "value negotiations" as exemplified in the Chico River Dam controversy in the 1970's. The Presidential Assistance on National Minorities (PANAMIN) and the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR), for example, tried to collaborate with Kalinga tribal leaders and holders of the *pudon* in bringing about solutions to the dam problem through meetings and dialogues. The military in the Kalinga area who were mandated to assist the PANAMIN and NAPOCOR, were interested in codifying the *pudon*. This tripartite effort did not produce substantially impressive results and positive impact in terms of winning the confidence and support of the Kalinga community. Evidently, one of the root causes of the crisis remains to be a problem of reconciliation between the technocratic concept of development advocated by the government and the meaning of development as understood by the Kalinga community. Apparently for this reason, the suspension of the Chico River Project was called by the NAPOCOR to give more room for research on this subject and other related research areas.

While the *pango* remains to be an important variable in understanding the meaning of development as conceived by the Kalingas, it has never been seriously considered in the feasibility component of the dam project as well as in the negotiation process. Since the dam controversy is primarily economic in nature, this will give the *pango* an important role in the dam project implementation as well in the total development process.

Likewise, the success of other rural development projects like the construction of irrigation systems, *Masagana 99* and Family Planning is highly affected by the decision processes and structures of the *pudon* and *pango*. For example, *pudon* holders are called to make decisions affecting boundary conflicts, labor force, resource allocation and water distribution requirements on irrigation projects that cover two or more villages. The *pudon* also provides for the maintenance of irrigation projects governed by the *pango* cooperative spirit in both the village and inter-village levels. Similar decision-making processes and socio-political pressures apply to the conflict resolution that arises from the technical content of the *Masagana 99* and the Family Planning *vis-a-vis* the indigenous doctrine of the *pudon* and *pango* systems. Presumably, "conflict management" in the rural development process was one of the rationale behind the institutionalization of the *tolong menolong* in Malaysia, the *royong gotong* in Indonesia and the *pao-chia* in Taiwan.

Given the parallelism between the *pudon* and *pango* on the one hand, and *tolong menolong*, *royong gotong* and *pao-chia*, on the other, a call for an institutionalization policy does not only mean recognizing the potentials of indigenous institutions and local cultures and traditions for development but

also giving them constitutional attributes. With these, they can assume a policy status. Going back to the definition of the institutionalization process mentioned earlier, it can be said that the lack of active, concerned representative local groups in the planning and implementation of rural projects as well as the absence of intermediate links (i.e., indigenous institutions) between policy-makers and intended beneficiaries have led to disastrous consequences in most developing countries.⁵⁵ The success of these rural development projects with strong political and administrative support at the national level depends in large measure on the general support of local organizations, whether government or private or indigenous, in rural areas.⁵⁶

Studies on indigenous institutions and traditional cultures are useful to development planners and policy-makers because these studies are likely to reveal concepts, principles, techniques and practices which previously had been callously considered. These studies will enhance our knowledge on and aid us in our continuing search for alternative approaches to rural development.

Conclusion

Attempts at institutionalizing the use of indigenous institutions as an approach to rural development entail careful planning in relation to the following considerations:

- (1) implications of the indigenization ideology and the indigenization process to the existing politico-economic (bureaucratic) structure, to the current development structures, plans and priorities, and to the present development planners and policy and decision makers,
- (2) the diversity of ethnic communities and various social groups in the Philippines,
- (3) formulation of a feasible methodology on proper blending of modern development technology and indigenous elements in the indigenization process, and
- (4) adoption of an ethical approach governing the values, goals, and interest of both conventional development models and the indigenization approach.

Whatever the term institutionalization means, it does not necessarily denote nationalizing the use of indigenous institutions as a "blueprint" approach for there may be many of them corresponding to the diversity of ethnic and social groups spread over and within the Philippine archipelago. Rather, it means nationalizing indigenous institutions in terms of the ex-

pression of political will spelled out in the constitution by the national leadership. This entails serious reconsideration and reexamination of the potentials, values and elements of these indigenous institutions that are relevant in transforming the various development approaches.

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²³ Unlike the traditionalistic Kalingas whose general identification is characterized by their highly indigenous culture, the lowland Apayaos are groups of immigrants from various places, rural and urban, converging to form a metropolitan community based on lowland quasi-modern culture.

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²⁵ In Kalinga, the stage of wet-rice technique consists of constructing terraces on slope gradients on mountain hillsides, and on flat alluvials along river and brook banks. These terraces are watered by gravity irrigation canals. On the other hand, dry-rice cultivation takes different forms in terms of its techniques, system of land fallow and land ownership. Especially as practised today in Kalinga and in the Cordillera Region, it involves first of all cutting down forest underbush and smaller trees using simple family tools like the bolo or the bigger head-axe. The logs, foliage and cleared undergrowth are left to dry and then burnt. Whatever is not burnt is taken to the perimeter of the kaingin to serve as a fence for the entire kaingin plots. When the kaingin is cleared, it is abandoned until the rains come during the planting season. The kaingin or the so-called *uma* is planted with rice, corn, mungo, beans and other secondary crops. After they are harvested, the *uma* plot is left to lie fallow for a period of more or less two years, if it is new, and four years on the average if it is an old one. While the former *uma* plot is in fallow, another new one is constructed somewhere to meet the rice needs of the farmer.

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³⁴ Maximo Garming, *Economic Organization in a Kalinga Village*, Master's Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1977, p. 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁶ The Kalingas argue that written traditions do not ensure long-term internalizing effects; rather, they contain empty words that can easily be manipulated. This is demonstrated in the oral tradition of the *pudon*, where any attempt to codify such institution is met with strong resistance.

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