

ANTHROPOLOGY IN DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION: THE KALAHAN EXPERIENCE

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It is my intention to present as clearly as possible what I feel to be the proper functions of anthropology in national development. The Kalahan Programs which I am describing are on-going and it will take another generation before a thorough or final report could be made. However, they have been in operation long enough to serve as an instructive case study.

Since the target community is a cultural (minority) community, the problem of integration is also an important part of the development task. Lest someone should point it out, I am fully aware that the New Constitution has dropped the word "minority" but our people have not dropped it and therefore I continue to use it here.

The Kalahan Region And The Ikalahan People

The Kalahan Region is that portion of the Caraballo Mountains where the deciduous trees grow (which is what the word "kalahan" means in the local language). The area is continuous but was divided among five different provinces when the provincial boundaries were drawn several decades ago. Most of it is included in western Nueva Vizcaya with portions of it being claimed by Benguet, Ifugao, Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija provinces. The specific area where the Kalahan Development Programs are

centered is in the southwestern corner of Nueva Vizcaya and eastern Pangasinan near Dalton Pass.

The climate is cool because of the high elevation (2,500 to 6,500 feet above sea level). It is also very wet, receiving the first precipitation from the heavily laden clouds coming in from the Pacific Ocean at the northeastern corner of the Central plains. Rain forest cover most of the region and some wildlife still exist despite being badly decimated by hunters prior to Martial Law. Portions of the area, however, are now in second-growth hardwoods or grasslands following their use as agricultural or pasture lands sometime in the past (Rice 1971a).

The people who reside in this area are properly known as the Ikalahan meaning "natives of the Kalahan area," although most lowlanders refer to them simply as "Igorot" and some of the other mountain people use the derogatory term, "Kalangoya." The total Ikalahan population is approximately 35,000. They are most closely related to the Pangasinan and Ibaloy peoples, having come from a common ancestral group now known as the Proto Benguet.

Their primary means of livelihood is swidden farming. They are not migratory but their agricultural technologies do require them to rotate the use of their fields and sometimes even prompt them to move their houses although they seldom go beyond five kilometers. Their primary food is *kamote* which is sup-

plemented with vegetables and fruits as are available. Selling handicrafts such as brooms and baskets provide a large portion of their cash income.

The residences of the Ikalahan are scattered but their communities are well-organized, each having a group of four or five elders who represent the community outside, preside at community meetings, act as mediators and otherwise give guidance in community affairs. To say that they "govern," however, is not accurate in the common sense of the term since their function is to help the community to analyze the problem until a consensus is reached. The elders then express the consensus and help the community to implement it (Rice 1972).

There have been public elementary schools in some parts of the mountains for at least four decades but as recently as 1970, we estimated that only one percent of the total population had any significant experience with secondary education and functional literacy was less than 40 percent.

The first task: Defining the goals

In this or in any other setting, I feel that the first task of anthropology is to help the community to define the goals of development. These goals will appear on two different levels: the level of the universal and the level of the specific felt needs.

The first level consists of general or ultimate goals which an anthropologist should be able to define with little reference to the target community. The basic universal goals of development are: physical health, mental health, protection and cultural continuity (Rice and Timá 1975). We should be reminded that these goals must be divorced from their usual ethnocentric definitions if they are to be helpful. By this I mean, for instance, daily requirements of proteins, minerals, vitamins and the like in the diet can be obtained from many different kinds of foods and not merely in fish and rice, or bread and beef, or *kamote* and beans. The means for satisfying the goal is culturally

determined even though the goal itself is universal.

The second level of goals springs from the felt needs of the society itself. The time honored "baseline-study" is the usual means by which the anthropologist determines these felt needs and during which the anthropologist is able to obtain other important information. These include the decision-making processes, social control techniques, socialization processes, and so on, which are valuable later on. Unfortunately some baseline studies have been used by outside individuals or agencies to manipulate the target community or impose outside goals which are culturally or socially inappropriate to the needs of the community. Use of the social science data in this manner is unethical.

The word which I have used in this section is "defining" the goals, not "setting" them. The community itself must SET its own goals and the anthropologist merely helps the community to verbalize or define those goals.

In the Ikalahan society the primary felt need, as the people expressed them to me during our first five or so years, was land security. They had been informed a few years before my arrival that the land where they now live and where their grandfathers had lived, had been declared as Watershed and Forest Reserve by the Philippine Government and they eventually would be driven out of it. They had not been consulted on this matter and were not willing to be chased from the land. They intended to protect their ancestral rights by whatever means were available. The doubts inherent in such a situation discouraged them from making any permanent improvements on the land such as terracing or the planting of fruit trees. Then their wisest move was to utilize the land, maximize their income from one harvest to another, and see what would happen. This they did.

A second problem which the people felt strongly about was the economic exploitation they suffered from the lowland merchants. They knew that they frequently were cheated, both with regard to local products which they

sold and the consumer goods which they bought. But they felt helpless because they had no control over the merchants with whom they dealt or the transportation which was vital to their economy. They knew they lacked sufficient capital to take their goods to other markets or make purchases elsewhere.

The third felt need was education. It was all the more difficult to express because it was a double-edged problem. They wanted their children to get an education in order to help them solve the first two felt needs. At the same time they had witnessed the effects of the education which several of their young people received in lowland high schools. As the elders expressed it, they came home drunk or were too lazy to make a living. Some of them adapted themselves to the lowland culture and found it easier to live there than to come home. "Why waste money on education when that is the result," the parents said to me.

These felt needs, however, are and must remain subordinate to the Ikalahan's basic values of peace, order, and friendly interpersonal relationships. The solution of the felt needs in the light of basic cultural values and universal goals must be a society's goals for development.

The second task: Developing the program

I have observed some pressures from public officials and others to remove the social scientist at this point and depend on the technicians to do the work. The social scientist undoubtedly needs the help of technicians to complete specific plans but few technicians possess the communication skills and cultural understanding which would enable them to work with the community effectively so that the plans would truly belong to the community.

In our own case the people came to me many times over a period of several years saying, "But I got cheated. You have to help me to do something about it." My usual reply was, "I know that you got cheated and that you get cheated regularly but all of your neighbors get cheated regularly also. One of these days all of you will be tired of it and start

to work together to establish and control your own marketing system." After more than five years of this, the people were finally sufficiently aggravated to try to work out some kind of cooperative marketing project to solve their problem. I sat down with them and helped them to prepare the articles and by-laws of a marketing cooperative. There were many long meetings before they were finished but they saw the work through. How many technicians would have been willing to wait that long to have begun such a task? Could such a program have succeeded without waiting for the community to strengthen its motivation?

The motivation to work for land security came easily because the felt need was stronger. They held several meetings and filed a series of applications with the government requesting the release and titling of their ancestral lands. Unfortunately, after they had entertained the Land Classification Teams and waited for a year for the results, they learned that all their petitions were denied because the land in question was "unsuitable for agriculture." This was a surprising outcome since the land had been used successfully for the past two generations.

By this time the people were anxious to work together. It was my task, at that point, to determine and explain what alternatives remained open to them. They decided they had been begging long enough. They filed a suit in court against the government to force it to release the lands.

The solution of the third, the education problem, came about by accident. I had hired a tutor for my children and allowed eleven other local young people to join the class. I made it clear to the local people that they could not get credit for their studies but they insisted on joining anyway because they wanted to learn. By the end of the first year the Ikalahan elders observed that their children were getting an education without the emotional problems which others had suffered when they studied in the lowlands. It was then that they came to me and said, "You are going to open a high school for us here in the mountains." I refused to take

on the task but the elders would not take "no" for an answer. They held several meetings, elected a Board of Directors, decided how much they could pay for tuitions and entrusted us with getting it done.

There are several aspects of program development, however, where the anthropologist must do more than listen to public opinion and then make himself helpful to the community in working out programs to solve the felt needs. The anthropologist should also see to it that universal goals are also being met. People react quickly when the goals of protection and physical health are in danger. The goals of mental health and cultural continuity, however, have a much slower reaction time and are less easily verbalized.

For instance, I felt that it was my responsibility to determine why the students reacted badly to lowland education. I found that their self-esteem had been seriously damaged by the cultural pressures and frequent discrimination which they suffered during their lowland exposure at a time when they were in the process of developing their own self-image (Rice 1971b). We sought, therefore, to build into our high school program techniques to enable the mountain students to develop self-esteem, and to help them understand their own heritage and their role as citizens. This was not a need that many of the people were able to verbalize clearly at the time but they showed their appreciation of the results.

Another consideration which may arise in developing a program is the need to provide a functional replacement for the cultural activities or institutions which are being lost in the development process. A simple illustration is shown in the acceptance of the Ikalahan people of modern medical techniques. They realize now that for most illnesses, modern medicines are more effective than the ancient ceremonies which most lowland peoples call *kanyaws*. The change may seem to be a simple matter of just stopping the *kanyaw* and getting an injection. Unfortunately it is not that simple and there are at least two specific functions of the *kanyaw* which require functional replacements.

The first concerns the diet. Prior to 1950 they caught wild game at least six times a month and a *kanyaw* was held every week. This was the time when they ate meat but it occurred so often that they had plenty of protein in their diet. With modern medicines we only have a *kanyaw* once every six or eight weeks and wild meat is no longer available. The standard diet does not now contain enough protein, and we can see many problems of protein deficiency in most of the students of our high school. To provide a functional replacement it was necessary for us to find other excuses for holding *kanyaws*. We have also started a rabbit project to provide more meat for daily consumption. In the past few weeks we got some dairy cows and I am amazed at the people's demand for milk.

A second problem related to the *kanyaw* is the problem of social control. During an earlier research on music, I discovered that their primary mechanisms for accomplishing social control were connected to their musical heritage. Most of these songs and chants, however, were used only during the *kanyaw*. With the gradual elimination of the *kanyaw* the medium for social control was also being eroded and without being replaced with other means.

In this regard two functional replacements were provided. One is to incorporate many old and new songs having social control functions into the hymnal used in the churches. Outsiders who discover these songs are surprised and even shocked to find such songs in the hymnal but in our society they not only "fit," they also perform an important function.

We have also adopted the ancient "tong-tongan" or conference style as the basis for the student body government at the high school. Here social control problems are acute because of their members and the fact that the students are still developing self-image and self-discipline. The Student Body Government is responsible for student discipline and are using techniques which are related to their own system.

Aside from providing us with a perspective from which to identify the need for functional

replacements, social science also provides a framework of organizational structures for the efficient supervision of the various programs. It is accepted practice that local personnel should be in actual charge of development programs. Local organizational structures must also be respected so that the control processes will be comfortable in the society and not inappropriate as in those which are patterned after foreign organizational models. This is the biggest problem with many of the present generation of cooperatives in the Philippines.

I am not suggesting that it is the task of the anthropologist to set up the organizations. What I am saying is that the anthropologist should recognize that historically, people have accomplished decision-making and social control processes; they must be encouraged to continue doing so. To borrow a foreign model might cause stress and strain in the community (Rice 1969).

The problem of integration must also be handled effectively. Eisenstadt (1952) provides insights on the problem of integration. He defines integration as the ability of a community to coordinate efficiently and cooperatively with the body politic while maintaining its own cultural identity.

Contrary to the expectations of most political officials, Eisenstadt (1952) discovered in his studies that a tightly-knit community with strong interpersonal ties and a strong sense of identity tends to integrate more readily than a community without those ties. In the Kalahan area, therefore, we have purposely sought to strengthen the community ties and sense of identity as Ikalahan so that the people will not be threatened by new outside contacts. Some observers felt that we were encouraging "separatism." On the contrary our goal is true unity in diversity. Instead of encouraging the Ikalahan to imitate lowland customs, we teach them how to deal with such customs while respecting and following their own. Our success in this program has been greater than we had anticipated as can be seen by the number of young people who are now studying in Manila

on government and other scholarships without feeling the emotional strain which their predecessors had.

In brief, therefore, it is the task of an anthropologist to listen and identify the felt needs and to help the society to translate the needs into specific programs of development. It is also the task of an anthropologist to anticipate some of the stresses and strains in the social structures as a result of any resulting changes and to encourage the people to integrate functional replacements for these changes which will help them to maintain cultural stability.

The third task: The communication bridge

It is not sufficient, of course, to develop a program designated to answer a specific felt need. Programs do not solve problems until after they have been implemented. Implementation usually requires government approval and financing. We must also remember that the persons who are most capable of exercising leadership in the local setting may be unable to communicate effectively with government or business officials. A communication bridge becomes necessary and the anthropologist should be able to fill the role.

It should be noted here that one of Eisenstadt's (1952) findings with regard to integration was that the presence of a communication bridge was an essential ingredient to effective integration. The bridge is a person who is able to be a part of the local community, and who communicates effectively with the members of the community as well as with the people outside of it.

In the Kalahan experience the function of the communication bridge can be illustrated with an example. When the chosen leaders and I worked together to try to get government approval for our mountain high school, we needed a legal personality in order to get it. I have also mentioned the producer's cooperative that the people planned. The cooperative was never registered, however, because it did not comply with the government-approved model. The people knew that

the government model was too remote from their own style of working to be effective in their community so they just filed the papers in a drawer. Now that they wanted to open the school they retrieved those same papers, made a few revisions, changed the name and they had the articles and by-laws for the Kalahan Educational Foundation.

The trustees of the Foundation are chosen by the three barangays and work like the community elders have worked together for centuries. Even though the trustees could govern the foundation and its projects, it fell upon my shoulders to take those papers and push them through the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Insurance Commissioner's office to get them registered.

Following this the trustees and I transferred the field of action to the Department of Education and Culture to try to communicate the intent and purpose of the Kalahan people to that Department. (Note here that language, *per se*, is not the primary problem in communication although it may be a big one).

As most of you are aware, even people who speak the same language do not have the same concepts and values. I then found it necessary to translate the desires, needs, and ideals of the Ikalahan into the bureaucratic language required in government and then turn around and translate the problems, desires, and regulations of the Department of Education and Culture into a format which would be meaningful to the Ikalahan. The result: we got the permit.

Meanwhile the land problem was coming to a head. The people could not get titles because of the regulations and limitations. It seemed that some kind of civil reservation would be the only solution. This was not acceptable to the local people, however, since all civil reservations are controlled by an office in Manila. It was at this point that Director Jose Viado attended a meeting (sponsored by the Manila office of the UNESCO) concerning the various problems in the Kalahan area. He suggested that perhaps our Foundation would be the solution to the land problems. So like a Kissinger in rubber shoes, I began several

months of shuttling back and forth between the mountains and the offices in Diliman until Memorandum Agreement No. 1 hatched out of the nest of red tape and created the Kalahan Agro-Forestry Development Project. This agreement put approximately 14,000 hectares of ancestral lands into the hands of the people through their legal personality, the Foundation. The agreement gave them clear control of the land and its resources but required them to develop the watershed capabilities of the area and to protect the fertility of the soil. It also respected their ability to lead and control their own development and both the government and the people now know where they stand.

The fourth task: The evaluation

Evaluation of the various programs of development must come from three different areas. One of these, is the evaluation by various outside agencies who have either funded or are responsible for licensing certain projects like the Academy. These evaluations are based on the principles on which the project was established and are not difficult to accomplish: if the project was prepared properly then it is related directly to the felt needs of the community.

The second type of evaluation, much more important, is done by the people themselves. I read the report of a development project in the Visayas recently and had the opportunity to make direct inquiries from one of the persons involved in the project. He confirmed my suspicions — the people who are supposed to benefit from the project are moving farther out into the mountains. It is clear that the evaluation of the community is negative, probably because they are well aware that they have no control over the project and must either sacrifice some questionable economic benefits from the project or sacrifice their freedom. The choice is not difficult for most of us, I feel. They left but the sponsors are now in the process of requesting an extension of the same programs from their funding agency.

In the Kalahan projects we do not have the same problem and we hope that we have built

enough communication processes into the situation to ensure that there is adequate local control over every aspect of it. Recently, however, several problems came to the attention of the Trustees. These were important enough to call a general meeting to make sure that the lines of communication stayed open. I should mention here that closed meetings are not the custom in the Kalahan area. Everything is done in the open and it is amazing how they are able to solve the most difficult problems this way.

The meeting was attended by all of the trustees, most of the Barangay officials, about 450 heads of families, two outside persons and many residents. It lasted almost 24 hours with brief recesses for eating and sleeping. It was a wide-open discussion with no agenda but during the meeting the trustees were able to describe their plans and visions and many individuals expressed their concerns and doubts.

The meeting gave the entire community an opportunity to evaluate the activities, plans, regulations and requirements which the trustees had established. The trustees made it clear that any regulations or plans deemed suitable were subject to revision if the people decided. After the discussions the trustees were given a complete vote of confidence which in itself was a most crucial type of evaluation.

Another type of evaluation is accomplished by the anthropologist himself. The universal goals are his criteria. He must not limit himself to the identification of actual problems or lack of fulfillment of the goals. He must also try to identify trends which could cause problems in the future.

The Kalahan experience has provided us with some interesting problems which illustrate this process. To expedite the development programs, for instance, it was necessary for us to recruit some individuals from outside to provide immediate technical services to the programs. These are skills which no Ikalahan is yet prepared to offer and this could provide a fertile field for feuds. Lately, I began hearing a few comments from some of the Ikalahan leaders when we acquired the sixth Ifugao. Now

we are careful to get future assistance from Ikalahan or other communities but not Ifugao. One must be reminded of the task of evaluating the interpersonal relationships among the various personnel and between the personnel and the population.

I should mention here that of the 35 faculty and staff who are now employed in all of the programs and projects, 56 percent are Ikalahan and identify themselves as such. Thirty-four percent are from other mountain societies, especially Ifugao and Kankanai. Only 6 percent come from lowland societies and one lowlander has married an Ikalahan making her identification with the mountain community more clear.

Another likely area for trouble to erupt in a program like this would be a conflict between the new and the old leadership. In the Kalahan projects the latter is represented by the elders who also control the board of trustees. The young or new leaders are the technicians or more highly educated individuals who are managing projects or teaching in the Academy. The relationship seems to be well spelled out because the elders respect the young leaders for their skills in managing the programs and they recognize their need of them. In return the young leaders recognize that the elders have the final authority in the programs and also respect them as representatives of the people.

Another potential area for conflict is the power struggle in the exploitation of the people by the newly educated members of the society. For this reason, we have pushed the training of many people in bookkeeping and accounting at an early stage in the program. If everyone knows how to read the financial reports, the treasurer, bookkeeper, and the managers will have difficulty exploiting the situation.

This type of evaluation must continue indefinitely, of course, lest the community suddenly finds itself with problems that it cannot solve and thus lose more than it has gained during the process of change.

Conclusion

The Ikalahan people have been encouraged by their ability to get things done during the

past few years. It is true that we have a few debts but our total assets are more than the debts. The various programs are all showing good promise of paying off the debts and eventually bringing in enough income to support those programs which cannot hope to be self-supporting.

One such program which has not been mentioned before is the clinic which is now being built with outside funds. It has a full-time nurse whose training was made possible through the help of the elders who provided some financial assistance in the Leadership Development Program. She is only one of seven graduates of that program, six of whom are already working in the immediate area. The seventh is working in Baguio City. Another twelve students are still in training and will soon be returning to the mountains. When these young people see the elders preparing jobs for them in the mountains and willing to provide assistance for them to study to take those jobs, they are happy to come home again instead of joining the "brain drain." Perhaps we will not be able to absorb 100 percent of our own students in our own programs but it appears we can come close to it.

I am sure all of you will agree that the most important aspects of community development are in the social area. It is easy for technological changes to be destructive of sociological and moral values if their influence is not balanced with appropriate adjustments in the sociological make-up of the community. We cannot get along without the technological assistance but the two aspects must cooperate or there will be more loss than gain. In this process the anthropologist is, or should be, adept if he or she is willing to listen to the people in their desire for a better life. It is not possible to prepare merely a project proposal or even a complete development plan with funds and drop it into the laps of the community and expect the right things to happen. There are many forces and influences which must be watched and intangibles which show up at the most embarrassing moments to upset the best prepared plans.

Development, if it is to be effective, must be controlled by the target community. If it is so controlled it will probably be dynamic and adjustable and readily changed to suit the changing patterns of the community. If development is to be effective it must also be moral; i.e., it must respect the personal, psychological, and spiritual welfare of each member of the community.

Note

This is a revised version of a paper read at the 1977 Philippine Sociological Society national convention held in Iloilo City. The author, an anthropologist, is treasurer of the Kalahan Educational Foundation.

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