

“From ‘Tribes’ to Peasants and Entrepreneurs: A Study of the Buhid Differential Responses to Change”*

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Introduction:

Traditional description of the *Mangyans* highlight their practice of shifting cultivation, subsistence economy and their relative autonomy and isolation from other groups. Conklin, in his pioneering ethnographic study, referred to the Mangyans as “forest-dwelling, non-Christian groups (who) live in small scattered settlements, speak mutually unintelligible languages, have little direct contact with each other or with the coastal Christians, and are loosely organized politically” (Conklin, 1957). Such a description needs revision for the said ethnic community has since then undergone some structural transformations that render traditional categorization of them as a “tribal, isolated community” rather obsolete.

In contradistinction to Conklin’s observations in the early 50’s, most Mangyans now live in fixed settlements which feature different forms of linkages with the town areas (i.e., social, political, economic, and religious), maintain diverse forms of exchanges with the other Mangyan ethnolinguistic groups, and use *filipino* as *lingua franca*. Thus, although the term “*Mangyan*” has a long history of usage, it is only within the past decade and a half that the people referred to by this name have become more accurately identified and “de-mystified”.¹

More significantly, a substantial number of Mangyans have shifted from purely subsistence production to partial cultivation of cash crops. On the other hand, government restrictions on the making of new *kaingin* from existing forest reservations have led the Mangyans to intensive cultivation of their swidden fields. Concomitant to this, a significant change in their mode of production has taken place. For instance, the control of their vital means of production, i.e., land, has been re-oriented to individualized landholdings. Moreover, their technology has shifted from the singular use of the bolo to plough agriculture. Specifically, one group of Mangyans known as the *Buhids*, who dwell in the peripheral areas of the towns, now feature two main production spheres: the first type revolves around traditional swidden activities and production in the *iyab*, the plot set aside for the cultivation of root crops and vegetables for daily consumption; the

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¹To this day, there are lowlanders who believe stories about the tailed Mangyans of Mindoro. Other residents of the island and even a PANAMIN regional officer claim that a “white race” of Mangyans, believed to be descendants of a shipwrecked English ship in the 19th century, live deep in the interior.

second type features the production of cash crops by way of using plough and carabao. Alongside this change, the institution of different forms of land allocation led to the establishment of new forms of social relations for the *Buhids*. The penetration of capital in the *Buhid* region for instance, has definitely enhanced the growth of stratification within the indigenous society, hence, there is a growing differentiation in terms of possessions and access to key resources within and outside the community.

To provide greater substance for my subject discussion, I intend to focus on a microcosmic setting which typifies the transformations cited earlier. This will be mainly about the Buhid community, their lifestyle, and their response to the external forces that confronted them. I have chosen to concentrate on the Buhids as they occupy a strategic position among the Mangyans found in central and northern Mindoro. Furthermore, no ethnographic study of this group has yet been made. Except for Conklin's cursory reference to them in his works as *Hanunoo*s, no systematic and extensive study of the Buhids exist to this day.

The first section of my paper gives an overview of the people and the diverse historical forces that moved these hill dwellers to opt for partial incorporation to the lowland structure. The succeeding parts identify the socio-political and economic factors which have led to peasantization and the emergence of incipient forms of entrepreneurship among the Buhids.

I. The Buhid Community: An Overview

As has been established in previous studies (Tweddel, 1970; Lopez, 1976; Barbian, 1977), the term "*Mangyan*" actually refers to six or seven ethnolinguistic groups in Mindoro.² Based on the latest census data from Barbian's 1977 linguistic survey of Mindoro, the hill-dwelling groups' population is estimated at 22,000. Roughly around 6,000 of the total population is said to be composed by the *Buhids*, the group under study. However, based on my own survey, and the corroborating reports of Buhid informants from the different areas, the Buhids number less, and would not probably exceed more than 4,000.

The central area of my field work is a key Buhid settlement called Batangan,³ located in the frontiers of southern Oriental Mindoro. Batangan is sufficiently representative of the Buhid ethnic group as a substantial number of its residents come from the interior Buhid

²Actually, there are only six ethnolinguistic groups namely, the Iraya, Alangan, Tadyawan, Tawbuhid, Buhid, and the Hanunoo or Mangyan-patag. The Ratagnons which are supposed to be the seventh are still ambiguously identified since they speak *Cuyanon*, a Bisayan dialect not indigenous to Mindoro, (cf. Tweddel, 1970).

³The name Batangan is derived from the main body of water in the area, i.e., the river Batangan. The tributaries that flow into the main stream are Matahos, Madling, and Baboy rivers.

regions. It is one of the region's major sources of a number of agricultural produce such as corn, calamansi, bananas, gabe, coffee, and cacao. The area also serves as a major linkage between the more interior Mangyan ethnolinguistic groups and the lowland government and entrepreneurs. Within the barrio, one finds a cross of Buhids from the generally identified Buhid ethnic zone in the peripheral areas of the towns of Roxas, Bongabon, and Mansalay in Oriental Mindoro, and San Jose in the Occidental part of the island.

The Buhid Settlement

The Buhids are traditional inhabitants of the hilly and mountainous regions of southern Mindoro. The indigenes have adopted the name "Buhid" because in their language, it appropriately describes them as "hill" or "upland" dwellers. Those who occupy the flat lands or coastal areas in Southern Mindoro namely, the Mansalay and Bulalacao areas, call themselves "Mangyan-patag" for the same reason that their name denotes, i.e., "*patag*" meaning "flat" or "plain." Such apt description of their groupings tell us that the different ethnolinguistic groups name themselves according to the distinguishing characteristic qualities of their respective ethnolinguistic settlements. (The term "*Hanunoo*" which Conklin popularized is virtually meaningless to the Buhids and the Mangyan-patags as well).

To this day, the Buhids continue to occupy their traditional ecological niche in the upland regions of Mindoro. In one of those hilly areas, between the towns of Bongabon and Roxas, lies Batangan, the focal point of my research.

As of the last barangay census in 1967 and my own household survey in early 1979, 600 individuals were counted to be permanent residents of the area. For the Buhids, the choice to reside in fixed settlements as one already mentioned was but a rational response to some of the diverse external forces which threatened to dispossess them of their land. Other intervening forces aside from the Bisayan migrants, included missionaries as well as designated local government officials. In the following discussion, we shall try to see how the Buhids coped with the incursion of the said external elements.

External Influences Affecting the Buhids

In the early 50's, evangelical missionaries came to Mindoro and introduced to the Buhids (as well as to the other Mangyan groups) the Christian faith. It was the early missionaries who first tried to persuade the Buhids to depart from their traditionally scattered pattern of settlement and move into the flatter regions of Batangan in order to form closer and larger settlements. This was encouraged by the missionaries in order to facilitate the instruction of the Christian faith and thus, carry on with the establishment of a local congregation in the area. The Buhids, in turn, were receptive to the missionaries' suggestion. Some of them who dwelt in the interior areas transferred to the central region of Batangan and cooperated with the Christian missionaries.

Through the organizing zeal of the Protestant missionaries, the Buhid "converts" from different areas were formed into a local *samahan* and then later, into a pan-Mangyan evangelical churches' association or the *Samahang Pangtribo ng mga Iglesyang Mangyan*. The establishment of this supra-Buhid linkage later became an effective channel through which other forms of exchanges, apart from spiritual concerns, were established among the different Mangyan communities. For example, a Mangyan-patag convert in need of cash may earn his money by rendering wage labor for a Buhid *faduwasay* or spiritual brother. Thus, a harmonious relationship between the different ethnolinguistic groups came about through their newly formed brotherhood.

Later, the influx of Bisayan migrants from the neighboring islands of Romblon and Masbate into the Buhid settlements in Mindoro brought a wave of disturbance in the community. Plunder or *fanunulis* suddenly became rampant whereby the Bisayan migrants forcibly extracted resources from the Buhids through the outright seizure of tools, food, produce, and animals. This, however, did not drive the Buhids away but rather, strengthened their resolve to stay in fixed and lowland-linked communities. As months passed, both the Buhids and the Bisayan migrants developed a trade relationship between them which involved the exchange of non-equivalents, as for example, a cheap *balukas* or blouse for one-half sack of milled corn.

At about the same time, the government included in its program for development the penetration of ethnic communities. Thus, at the time the government entered the Buhid region, the Buhids were ready to accept the political patronage of the town officials. This they favored to protect themselves from the increasing number of lowland migrants who, through cunning and force, divested them of their resources, mainly, land. As a protective mechanism for survival, the Buhids resolved to establish trade as well as political linkage with the lowlanders.

The linkage with the lowlands brought further ramification when the regional government appointed a "Mangyan governor" in the late 50's. This move was made to minimize the destructive effects of a Buhid shifting cultivation as perceived by the central power. For the purpose of creating a settled and government-incorporated community, the Mangyan governor, himself a lowlander, tapped the leadership of an already emergent Buhid leader, a widely travelled man within and around the surrounding islands of Mindoro. The said Buhid, named Yaom, was then appointed "*Mangyan tinyente*" who later, has become one of the number of links in the hierarchy of government officials acting on the Buhid community.

The pioneering expansion of the town and regional government into the Buhid ethnic zone was later superseded by the entrance of the CNI or the Commission on National Integration in 1957. The creation of this agency made available to the Buhids and other ethnic groups government resources not within their reach. These resources primarily consisted of legal support, the extension of public education, and the

introduction of government political machinery for them. One of the immediate programs sponsored by the CNI was the institution of a local barrio council, independent of the Tagalog and Bisayan barrios in their region. Yaom, the previously appointed Mangyan "*tinyente*", won the election and thus, became the first, and continuing "*Kapitan*" of the Buhid barrio. This title gave him official sanction to act as liaison officer for both the Buhids and the townspeople. His leadership gained a broader base when he was elected "*presidente*" of the pan-Mangyan council or *samahan* established by the CNI. Though the *samahan* did not last long, it gained a new role for the Buhid leader as a political and economic broker of the southern Mangyan groups. To this day, the broad leadership of Yaom extends through to the peripheral and interior domains of the towns of Bongabon, Roxas, and Mansalay of Oriental Mindoro. Despite the existence of barangays in respective barrios, most Buhids continue to elect Yaom for their mediator. He is recognized by all Buhids and even some Bangon Mangyans as their "*Meyor*" or immediate political patron.

Aside from the "mayorship" of Yaom, there exists a "*konsehal*" in each of the dependent Mangyan settlements. His office provides the means of linkage with the Buhid *sentro* in Batangan. He is appointed by the Buhid mayor on the basis of his perceptible leadership in his community. This intra-group political linkage also extends to the economic sphere, with the *konsehal* acting as the Buhid mayor's "*agente*" or local purchaser of goods. Through the development of socio-political and economic linkages, closer ties between the other Mangyan communities and Batangan, the Buhid *sentro*, are thus fostered.

Thus, despite the abolition of the CNI which officiated Yaom's legal authority, the Buhid 'mayor' still has adroitly maintained his key role as interpreter of the cultural dilemmas of the Mangyans in his area of jurisdiction. The institution of the "*Bagong Batas*" or the New Order which brought about certain changes in the Buhid way of life has all the more emphasized the importance of Yaom's strategic function as mediator between the Buhids (and the other Mangyans as well) on the one hand, and the town officials and entrepreneurs on the other. His expertise in town matters, his strong sense of leadership, and his reliability in settling disputes have very effectively validated his position of authority among his people.

II. The Socio-Economic Transformation

The establishment of political linkage with the regional and national government through the CNI ushered in structural changes in the Buhid mode of production. These changes came about as a result of the reallocation of existing land resources thus, making possible the introduction of techno-economic innovations in the Buhid region.

Because of the growing number of Tagalogs and Bisayans encroaching the traditional Buhid ecological niche, the surveying of land in the Buhid ethnic zone was proposed by the CNI regional office

to pave the way for individual land declarations. This was eagerly subscribed to by the Buhids as a protective measure against the rampant grabbing of land by the lowland migrants. In effect, this led to the individual partitioning of the officially listed forest reservations whereby pioneer settlers of the area were given the largest land shares. (Without the active collaboration of the Buhid mayor with the government agents from the CNI and the Bureau of Forestry, the whole project would not have been as successful as it already was for the Buhids.) Thus, the move to have the land area surveyed and partitioned opened for the Buhids a new way of looking at things, especially in their holding of land.

Buhid Landholding System: Past and Present

Traditionally, the Buhids sharply distinguished *daga* or land from *it natubo* or wild vegetation. Greater differentiation was made between land and *tanum* or cultivated crops. Land, in the traditional Buhid thinking, could never be individually or corporately owned, alienated, or controlled. It was seen as a free good outside the control of humans. Only the *afu-daga*, the master or spirit of the land, had marginal control of it and from time to time, he was believed to display his powers in nature. Land erosion, which takes place during heavy rainfall and typhoons, was taken to mean an act of wrath by the *afu-daga*. To appease him, a ceremony requiring a meal offering of *nasugba-baboy* (i.e., slaughtered pig singed over fire) and *fafa-fayay* or boiled rice had to be enacted. An antithesis to this view is the prevailing concept that most forms of vegetation and all crops can be possessed, alienated, and controlled by the individuals of the primary kin group. However, in the case of wild-growing plants (*it natubo*), ownership can only be claimed when they fall within the range of one's own clearing and swidden field, otherwise known as *insakup* among the Buhids.

During the past two decades, however, increased pressure on land brought about by migration *en-masse* of Bisayan migrants caused many changes in the Buhid outlook. Some were driven to the more interior parts of southern Mindoro as their swidden fields were seized by the lowland migrants. Others later resolved to restructure their traditional concept of landholding by favoring the adoption of private ownership of land. This latter move proved more feasible for the Buhids that a high percentage of government effort was positively received by them. It must be pointed out however, that a tiny segment of the Buhids refused incorporation into the evolving system. This small section remain in the interior parts to this day and continue to practise shifting cultivation. Yet, this has not prevented the rest of the Buhid populace to adopt new innovations introduced to them. The comparative speed with which they willingly modified their traditional methodology of appropriating from nature came as a result of the initial impetus given by the Commission on National Integration. The government, on the other hand, continued to initiate community projects for the Buhids and other Mangyan groups in its aim to motivate the indigenes to coordinate with them. This can be seen in the way people regard the strong leadership of Yaom, a very clear example of the beneficial effect with which his subscription to the 'New Order' has brought him.

Until the past decade, the Buhids had been ignorant of the bureaucratic process involved in the legalization of land ownership. But because of the effective patronage system between the local town officials and the Buhid leader, a network system with the government has been established by the Buhids to avail themselves of important information for the protection of their land. Yaom, the Buhid mayor, wisely conceded to become the forestry officials' "informant-and-guide" in the interior that eventually, he won them as his *sandugo*⁴ or regular exchange partner. For this reason, the Buhids have the largest land shares in forest reservation areas in Mindoro, and the only Mangyan group with the least land problem.

In contrast to the Buhid situation, the Mangyan-patags or Hanunoos have lost their lands and have become absorbed into incipient forms of tenancy and wage labour because of the unscrupulous maneuvering of the legal system by the lowlanders. These lowlanders, now possessing the titles of Mangyan land properties, have ironically claimed to become *amos* or masters of the same people they have dispossessed. The natives, on the other hand, had no choice but to serve as *tauhan*, i.e., either as tenants or hired farm hands.

Reacting to the Mangyan-patags' absorption into the lowland economy as *tauhan* or *pastores* of Tagalogs, the Buhids have prided themselves to be the only Mangyan group without any *amo*. As one Buhid informant put it: "*Kaming mga Buhid ay hindi kagaya ng mga Mangyan-patag na may mga among pinagsisilbihan*" or, "We Buhids are unlike the Mangyan-patags who have masters to serve."

This distinctiveness over land control, however, have made the Buhids careful in their tributary relations with the government. Many of them believe that the stability of their status as "landowners" can only be preserved through religious payment of *buwis* or taxes. They have observed how their possession of some government papers such as tax receipts and land declaration forms have warded off unscrupulous Tagalog and Bisayan land grabbers. This has all the more encouraged them to pay their dues to the town government annually.

Howbeit, the lawfulness of their tax payment is rather questionable. While it is true that local forestry officials have surveyed and partitioned land among them, there is no legal proof to their ownership since the Buhid *posisyon* has not been officially released. Moreover, the annual Buhid income from their cash cultivation does not really warrant tax deduction because it falls below the average taxable income. Despite all this, tax consciousness among the Buhids is widespread. The annual tax paying event in the Buhid *sentro* has evolved into some kind of a fiesta or a grand market day. It is marked by the visit of the heavy turnout of payers. To this day, this enthusiastic response to tax payment continues despite repeated urgings by the PANAMIN

⁴This word literally means "blood-brother". Its modern meaning however, has no basis on the ancient rite associated with the blood-brotherhood of pre-Spanish Filipinos.

(Presidential Assistance on National Minorities) to stop the said practice.

From another perspective, the Buhids seem to look at the annual tax-paying event as some kind of a ritual where they pay tribute to a great "afu" as represented by the *Gobyerno*. Thus, for the Buhids, the need to pay such annual tribute is necessary to insure their continued hold on the and and maintain the protection afforded by the *Gobyerno*'s representatives in the towns.

On the part of the town government, one observes a contradictory policy of wanting to conserve and at the same time dissolve the indigenous or internal Buhid structure. The government's effort to restructure the non-capitalist Buhid form of production, for example, is partly a dissolving of the Buhid internal structure, while subordinating this transformed institution to the predominant town capitalist relations is a way of conserving it. This extractive hold of the town government leaves room for the maintenance of the basic Buhid subsistence with a little additional surplus in order that these people may reproduce their existence. An example of this is the practice of the Bongabon local government of giving back ten per cent of the collected annual Buhid tax to the said group for financing of their various community projects, as in the construction of water tank for their water supply.

Moreover, the establishment of linkages with the town and regional government of Mindoro led to the penetration of capital in the Buhid areas. Through the effective mediation of the Buhid 'mayor', town entrepreneurs eager to expand their market operations met with local cultivators and engaged business with them. The Buhid 'mayor' conveniently became their middleman through whom the entrepreneurs pass various sums of money as capital for the purchase of local Buhid produce. Such practice later spread out to other enterprising Buhids who, upon knowing, acted as *agentes* for the town merchants.

The creation of market demands for Buhid produce made significant changes in the Buhid agricultural production. For instance, the whole annual cycle of Buhid production was restructured to accommodate the partial production of each crop. As a result, the marginal production of certain crops was intensified at the expense of other traditional crops. An example of this is the intensification of corn cultivation (which formerly was only a peripheral crop), and the abandonment of palay production. In fact, there is almost a complete shift of production from rice to corn, since the former commands a higher price in the market and takes lesser time and energy to produce. However, with this shift in production and the increase of cash flow in the Buhid region, there is also a proportional increase in rice consumption among the Buhids. Most of their production earnings are used to buy rice from the lowland sundry stores in the vicinity.

With the incorporation of local producers in the town and regional markets, the Buhid agricultural production was expanded to allow the cultivation of permanent crops as coffee, cacao, calamansi, and

coconut. This has resulted in the economic prosperity of the Buhid region.

From Bolo to Plough Agricultural Production

With the introduction of surplus production, many Buhids have adopted the use of lowland agricultural implements such as carabao and plough. This was partly due to the influence brought by the lowland Bisayan migrants in the region who traded their ploughing skills for cash or loan of land from the Buhids. Later, because of government restrictions on the traditional slash-and-burn practice among the Buhids, plus increased land pressure on the growing Buhid population and the influx of lowland migrants in the area, the technological shift to plough and carabao was all the more hastened. The Buhids themselves explain that the scarcity of swidden and forest areas allowable for clearing has made them turn to ploughing and therefore to an intensive cultivation of the available land. Those who have shifted to this technology point out that they use ploughing or *adadu* only for swidden patches taken over by cogon grass. It is likewise confined to the production of corn, their primary cash crop.

All these techno-economic changes have generated new modes of recruiting and organizing labor outside the household, leading to the use of wage labor. In the past, the traditional Buhid swidden or *iyab* is confined to the clearing and cultivation of a comparatively small tract of land, i.e., approximately thirty feet in width and two hundred feet in length. In this rather small area, the Buhids planted their basic subsistence, consisting mainly of sweet potatoes, yam, taro, cassava, plus a few varieties of vegetables, occasional fruit bearing trees (as one or two coconut trees), a few stalks of sugar cane and, on a seasonal basis, rice and corn. This manageable size of the *iyab* did not therefore call for great use of labor resources. After the initial felling of trees, slashing of undergrowth, burning and clearing, the task of looking after the *iyab* is usually left to the woman who does mainly the planting and weeding. Thus, the size of the cleared land for cultivation, as well as the actual bulk of work involved did not warrant the existence of labor exchange system beyond the *talahanan* or household.

Later, however, with the emergence of lowland market demand for Buhid produce and the consequent linkage of their economy with the town structure, the establishment of supra-family labor exchange system has become co-extensive. This is done to facilitate the cropping activity. Wage labor is also resorted to in the harvest of other cash crops such as calamansi, coffee, and cacao, particularly among those with sizeable fields. In the lowland linked Buhid settlement, types of labor distribution vary between *sadili*, which employs the use of one's own labor, and *sul-ugan*, which features a reciprocal exchange of labor by a task group that works on rotation basis, eventually resulting in the creation of a mobile labor cooperative. The latter also includes *igsaduhan* or shared meals. Wage labor, on the other hand, vary between *tangdanan*, which pays the individual worker on a daily basis, and *pakyawan*, which agrees on a wholesale labor arrangement for the completion of a specific task. Other forms of labor exchange

include *tarugbungan*, an organized labor group for projects benefiting the whole community, and the *tugbong*, a token service for individuals premised on the notion of delayed reciprocity. Both feature non-immediate forms of payment.

On the whole, the development of techno-economic changes in the Buhid community reduced the sharp division between the sexes. There is much more interchangeability in production roles among the Buhids. Thus, a Buhid man would sometimes take care of all the cooking for the *igsaduhan* or shared meal in a *sul-ugan* while his wife would busily sow corn along with other men recruited for the reciprocal labor exchange group. This freer exchange of roles in production among Buhids may be inferred from the fact that in the organization of task groups, whether on a reciprocal cooperative basis, or by wage labor, sexual status is not given any importance in the recruitment of laborers. It is thus quite common to see women working alongside men in the fields and doing the same bulk of work in clearing and cutting undergrowth, burning, planting, etc. Only in the area of ploughing do men seem to have developed specialization and monopoly of skill. Although a few Buhid men have learned ploughing, expertise in the said agricultural method is given an important value in the Buhid community. Anyone possessing such skill receives a comparatively high remuneration in the Buhid region, as a day of ploughing using one's own tools would cost thirteen pesos in contrast to the ridiculously low priced labor in *gamasun* (slash and cutting of undergrowth) which pays only three pesos. Possession of carabao, plough, as well as ploughing skills has therefore generated extra source of cash and thus surplus income for the Buhids. Such surplus has been used by a few in small-scale business investment as the opening of sundry stores. Other Buhids have invested their surplus in buying local produce and selling them at profit to regular *sukis* (buyers) in the town market. Those with larger surplus have turned to buying lands and livestock as other forms of investment. Other Buhids who have greater boldness and willingness to experiment in relationships and strategies have invested in merger forms of entrepreneurship. These higher aspirations for economic growth and prosperity were also largely shaped by given socio-economic opportunities within their environment. An example of this is the Buhid mayor's successful manipulation of all the resources within his disposal, i.e., his position, political connections, information networks and partnerships with both town and regional merchants which have given him ample resources to accumulate capital and expand his economic activities. In consequence to his efficient action in the past, Yaom today enjoys comparatively larger resources, a higher living standard, and prestige in his own community.

Summary:

As I indicated at the outset, my aim in this paper is to identify the point of articulation between Mangyan local structures and the regional structure in Mindoro. I have tried to do this by focusing on a microcosmic setting, that is, in taking the Buhid socio-economic

structure and studying how it is linked with the wider regional structure through the activities of key men in the area.

The techno-economic, political, and social changes which have been identified all lend support to my contention that the Buhids, like many of the traditionally classified "tribal", "traditional", "pre-industrial" groups often studied in an "as-if" state of autonomy, could be more appropriately classified as peasants. The Buhids as well as other Mangyans share the same Janus-face peasant quality of having one foot in the past and another in the present, i.e., an ambivalent response to the state and the dominant economic system. To put it in another way, the internal Buhid structure shows both accommodation and resistance to the town and regional structures. While various forms of linkages exist between the town and the Buhid settlements, these people have maintained a certain degree of resistance or autonomy. This is seen clearly in the persistence of their subsistence production alongside their cultivation of cash crops. As such, the Buhid economy gives them leeway to survive outside the market system. For instance, in the series of typhoons which devastated their cash crops last year, the Buhids' cash economy suffered, but not their basic subsistence. These people simply tightened their belt, shifted back to their root crop diet of camote, gabe, and ube and easily survived the adverse effects of typhoons.

The relative autonomy of the Buhids may also be observed in other areas of their socio-cultural life. This is evident in the persistence of traditional folk medicine even to this day (as in cases of giving birth, in sickness, and in death). Despite the relatively easy access to lowland medicine, the ordinary Buhid normally turns to *iglahi* i.e., an expert in chanting and driving out of *labang* or evil spirits (which are believed to be the root cause of illness). In case of failure, the Buhid turns next to *langamlang*, i.e., a specialist in skillfull massaging, which aims to draw out of the body foreign objects which could be the source of a person's illness. Most Buhids therefore turn only to imported medicine when traditional ways of coping with sickness fail.

Aside from withstanding the influence of modern science and technology, the Buhids' cultural resistance is also reflected in the persistence of their language which in fact serve as a medium for communication between them and their client group, the Bangon.

On the whole, I have tried to show that the outcome of government intervention and capitalist penetration in the so-called traditional communities do not necessarily result in the breakdown of the indigenous social structure which threatens an outright assimilation of the indigenous group to the center. Such traditional models of change are rather simplistic and they fail to see the inner agents of the dynamic of societies that would selectively adopt and resist change acting on them.

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