INDIGENOUS RELIGION, INSTITUTIONS AND RITUALS OF THE MAMANWAS OF CARAGA REGION, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The Mamanwas, one of the IP communities of Caraga region. Said to be one of the original settlers of Caraga and considered the Negrito group of Mindanao. Only very few literatures and studies written about them. Despite of massive acculturation of other IP groups of the region such the Agusan-Surigao Manobos, the Mansaka/Mandaya, Banwaon, Higaanon and Talaandig. The Mamanwas still on the process of integration to Philippine body-politic. It is in this scenario they were able to retain indigenous religion, institutions and rituals. Thus the study was conducted. It covers on the following sites: Mt. Manganlo in Claver, Lake Mainit in Alegria both Surigao Del Norte, Hitaob in Tandag City, Lubcon and Burgus in Cortes and Sibahay in Lanuza of Surigao Del Sur respectively. The study used ethnographic method with strict adherence of the right of pre-informed consent in accordance with RA 8371 or Indigenous Peoples Right Act of 1997. It can be deduced from the paper that despite of socio-cultural changes of the IP’s of Caraga the Mamanwas were able to retain these practices but for how long? Moreover, socio-cultural change is slowly taking place in the Mamanwa social milieu. Preservation of these worldviews is wanting as a part of national heritage and for posterity.

Keywords: Mamanwa, Indigenous Religion, Tahaw, Institutions

INTRODUCTION

According to Garvan (1964) and Alameda (1993) the Mamanwas can be considered as one of the original inhabitants of the region. They were often called peace loving people (Maceda 1975). Beyer, (1927) the father of Philippine Anthropology (1916) well thought-out them as the Negrito group in Mindanao and Jocano (1996) classified them as band level group. Eleazar (1985) called them as the original Cantilangnon/Surigaonon. Castro and Tiukinhoy (1997) considered them as indigenous in the province of Surigao De Norte. Stoneking (2008) in his genetic analysis revealed the Mamanwas is the oldest ethnic group in the Philippines. On the other hand, Tomaquin and Tomaquin (2000) in their extensive study of the ethnic group found out the discriminatory name calling of the tribe by the dominant population of the region as: “Kongking, Tagaijas, Tagamanganlo, Mamaw etc.,” It does not only denote a discriminatory name callings of the Mamanwas but a form of verbal abuse as well. Today, moreover the Mamanwas stood the test of times, and commencing the renaissance of the tribe colorful culture and practices for posterity, and anchored of the right of self determination of the tribe. With the passage of IPRA Law of 1997 they have been gradually integrated to the Philippine body-politic and their ancestral domains and Indigenous knowledge System (IKS) protected. The study investigated the indigenous religion and institutions of the Mamanwas. It specifically discussed the parts of the rituals; however there is the assumption that social changes encloses these practices as cultural changes impinge on in some extent the traditional Mamanws society. It examined the impact of the said factors to the traditional Mamanwa social milieu. Despite of these changes
of some parts of their material culture they were able to preserve these institutions, rituals and religion. Their strong attachments of their physical environment were influenced by these practices. *Tahawan*, the indigenous religion is derived from the word “*Tahaw*” which literary means supreme being or god. Thus, it can be deduced that this is a very sacred religious ceremony nevertheless it is to be instituted not only of harvest/thanksgiving time, in times of tribal conflict, merry making and community problem such hunger and pestilence. This is also observed as a folk healing ritual of the Baylan/Tambalon (Shaman). The value systems of the Mamanwas are influenced by these indigenous rituals. The belief of *Tahaw* as their supreme god is clearly discernible. To this end the Mamanwas are indigenously very pious people. In fact this *Tahawan* ritual in which they would give thanks and make merry. They are still practicing this ceremony which is an indigenous manner of worship, thanksgiving and cheery making. This aims to give the readers/academic community a panorama of these spiritual rites. It will cover the ethnographic presentation of it and its influences on the Mamanwas’ worldviews. We accept as Mamanwa scholars that these practices are gradually vanishing but the number who believes of its resurgence for the renaissance of these celebrations are not yet trifling. This paper is the result of the researcher’s extensive study of the group. This added the scarcity of literatures published of this fast vanishing tribe of the region. And I believe on the contribution of this paper in the ethnographic and cultural heritage of this part of Mindanao are enormous for there are scarcities of literatures written about the Mamanwas. The paper would like to document this worldviews (indigenous, religion and rituals) in that view preserving for the next generation of Filipinos. Significantly it is worth studying for despite of massive cultural transition of the IP’s of Caraga the Mamanwas were able to retain these practices.

![Figure 1. Map of the Philippines where Caraga Region is highlighted](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caraga_date_accessed_Dec. 4, 2013.)
METHODOLOGY

The research employed the ethnographic method. It was used to have in-depth look of their culture. An ethnographic research technique uses the participant observation and many of the characteristic of non-participant observation studies in an attempt to obtain a holistic picture as possible of the subject of the study (Frankel and Wallen, 1994). The emphasis in ethnographic research is on documenting or portraying the everyday experience of individuals by observing and interviewing them. The study uses in-depth interview and continual, ongoing village immersion. The ethnographic methods of participant observation, non-participant observation, field methods, village immersion, in-depth interview, enable the researchers to present the ethnography of the Mamanwas. The ethnographic design was also supplemented with the participation of Mamanwas group activities and with intensive work with key informants. The researcher employed the techniques of field diary or notes, the use of camera in documentation, video, cameras, and micro cassette-recorders in recording the data from the interview. Non- participant observation was widely used for it allow direct recording of the data. To verify or crosscheck the data in the observation, the researcher verified it to the elders. The Mamanwas at the start of the fieldwork were suspicious to the purpose of the researcher. It is in the reason that the researcher established a good rapport with the Mamanwas by participating in some of their daily activities just to gain the trust of the Mamanwas. Building a rapport with the Mamanwas was essential in studying their socio-cultural views and practices. There was no problem in the dialect between the Mamanwas and the researcher for they are fluent in Surigaonon. To cross check the data on Mamanwas ethnography, periodic interviews were conducted. Another approach to crosscheck the ethnographic data was by direct observation. The locale/sites of the study consisted six settlements of the Mamanwas in Caraga namely: Manganlo/Toyatoya in Claver, Lake Mainit- both Surigao Del Norte, Sibahay in the Municipality of Lanuza, Lubcon and Burgos in Cortes and Hetaob in Tandag in the province of Surigao del Sur. Most of the Mamanwas in Caraga resides in the said settlements. Free and prior informed consent was secured accordance with RA 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Act of 1997. The research process obtained a written consent from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) an agency of the Republic of the Philippines created for the advancement for the welfare of the Indigenous Peoples (IP’s). Written free, prior and informed consent were obtained from the sites of study this includes the permission for taking pictures and tape recording. The ethical considerations in the study includes the privacy of the respondents/key informants was always upheld. The Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) was respected, recorded for posterity and recognition of the community/communities high degree of collective knowledge which is a mark of a highly cultured people with a distinct identity and in the forefront of Philippine nation uniqueness as a diverse/multi-ethnic society. The respondents/communities in the sites were informed of the intent of the research. Finally the source of funding was revealed that it was personal, meaning the source of research fund was from the researcher own resources not from any funding research agency. That they were informed pertaining to the findings of this research would be the researcher contribution in the field of knowledge and one of the means in valuing the pluralistic Filipino culture. Hence recording the Mamanwas culture is a part of preserving the Filipino nation cultural inheritance as a unique nation in South East Asia which is highly diverse and multi-ethnic society.
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA
Binaylan (The Nocturnal Prayer) and healer/shaman ritual

The ceremony is held at the house of the Baylan/Binulusan/Tambajan (healer). Everyone present in the said occasion should be facing the east direction. Ladies sit at the left, while gentlemen at the right. The children should stay in any side. The overture on this first action is the preparation of the Mam-on (preparation of betel nut). It is placed in plate - like container. After that the sarok/tambajan/baylan (healer) instigate by stating his prayers/tud-om. This is called pangangade. It starts with a low voice that gradually increases in volume, and then softer and softer then followed by silence. In the front side of the Binulusan/Baylan/sarok/tambajan were the seventeen plates, which were well arranged in a circle form facing the tuyagdok/altar made of coconut and anahaw leaves. At the middle of the said circle are the seven plates, the three of which are paired with a saucer and are placed at the right side (near to the baylan/sukdan). With the exception of the last plate at the end of the circle. Each plate and saucer has nine betel nuts and betel leaves, the leaves of betel are cut into small pieces in heart shape of at least 5 (five) centimeters. On a piece of betel leaf is a seven division of the betel nut with a lime sufficient for chewing. This time the Baylan/sarok/sukdan/tambajan faces the direction of the full moon, reciting in some extent singing his sacred prayers (Tud-om) calling for the Abyan (Spirit World). He summoned the spirits of the departed in the wish they will look after the community. This time he informs/asked the partaker/participants to chew the prepared betel nut’. At this point, he starts to tremble or in the mental state of trance. Though he proceeds with his sacred prayer (Tud-om), dancing facing the Altar made of bamboo, coconut and anahaw leaves and continued chanting the Binaylan or sacred prayers in the Tud-om. It is assumed that the voice of the Baylan/sarok/tambajan was now from Tahaw/Magbabaya or from the Abyan/the spirit. The Diwata/spirits revealed the coming calamity, pestilence, sickness and danger. The Baylan/sarok/tambajan symbolize/represent the village and ask the spirit not to strike the settlement. When the spirits respond positively, the sarok/tambajan/baylan will utter these words: Kay hendadawod Maluaser De that the spirits will protect them as it has been protecting the village before. Then, the Baylan/sarok stands and dances with the indigenous
guitar (kudlong), drum (gimbar). The ceremony they consider can provide a good harvest, good result the game (hunting) and also a protection from sickness. The central part of the ceremony is the slaughtered of white pig. The boar/pig is to be offered to Tahaw/Magbabaya supreme deity. Its blood will be sprinkled in the Altar “Oyag dok” by the Baylan. After the prayer of the Baylan/shaman the pig is to be roasted and shared by the community. In the whole night. Other preparation of the prayer cooked flour from cassava, starch from lumbia palm, liquor such sowom or tuba, or local wine will be used. The ceremony ended early in the morning. It is highly observable the great energy of the tribe was manifested in the entire ceremony since dancing, accompanied with the gimbar, kudlong and continuous singing of the tud-om the whole night lead by the baylan was in a very festive mood. Before the end of the ceremony, early in the morning/dawn the tribe will converse at the center of the oyag dok (altar). In this part, they will express their gratitude to the Baylan (healer) for officiating the ceremony.

Plate no. 2 The researcher with a Mamanwa-Manobo Child (Child of mixed marriages of Mamanwas and Manobos in Mt. Hetaob Tandag, Surigao del Sur).
Plate No.3 The Gimbar (Mamanwas drum made of dried skin of iguana)
Offering of in kind to the Baylan (healer) usually rice, roots crops and other material things like sinagadan (spear) and bolos etc. were given to the Baylan. He received the offering joyously.

Pagsangkalanlan

Another religious ceremony is the pagsangkalanlan. For several weeks the Mamanwas gather salted meat of wild pigs (usually uncooked). They are going to store up it in bamboo internodes. They are going to combine it with starch from a lumbia tree. Then they will cook it. While cooking, they will dance around the preparation and should become strident. The ritual dance is called binangazozo. After they were done dancing, they will get a tungkayan, a wood or stick used in beating the gimbar (drum made of the skin of iguana). After that the baylan/sarok guided the communal prayer, the banquet and merriment will go on followed by eating accompanied by drumming the gimbar. When somebody is sick in the village, it is believed that it is brought by Habang thus be treated in the ceremony. The spirit that gives sickness will be cast out in the ceremony. The ceremony is aimed at inviting Tama, the diwata of the forest, and the in charge of the game. If Tama pleased he will release wild pigs and deers. The belief that Tama as the anito in-charge or herder of hunting animals is clearly noticeable. The lowest in the rank of the deities is the diyatot. The diyatot is believed to dwell in the balete tree. The sukdan/sarok/tambajon/binulusan/baylan (healer) have two kinds - those who are specialist in herbal medicine and those who are specialist in their rituals and ceremonies. A young Mamanwa can be a sukdan/sarok/tambajon/binulusan/baylan by training, inheritance or by dream. The sukdan/sarok/tambajon/binulusan/baylan can either be male or female. Moreover, a male tambajon/baylan is always desired. If in case there are female tambajon, they serve as assistant to the male.

In the ceremony, the sarok/sukdan/baylanis assisted by female tambajon. The minor Tambajon assists in the Mam-on ceremony. The main Tambajon followed by the minor one first performs the spiritual dance (Katahawan). After they are done, the rest of the participants will join. A single gimbar/drum is the only instrument used is the ceremony. It
is expected that after the dance, request are made to the gods, the main sukdan/baylan trembles or in the state of trance. He should be brought to the constructed altar with a boar. The minor Tambajon gets near the altar (Oyagdok) and offers the sacrificial dance of prayer. After the main sukdan is done with his prayers, and the minor Tambajon finishes his/her dance, the main sukdan/baylan will get a spear and pierces or kills the boar. After which prayers of wish and supplications/petitions are offered to supreme god Tahaw. Then, the blood of the boar is scattered to the ground. The community will bring young coconut leaves for the blessing of the main baylan afterwards. The members of the community will pass by in the constructed altar to be cured of possible illness.

After wards they will butcher the pig, cook it and then the whole community will share with it. Another related ceremony offered to Tama is releasing a hen in the forest. The ritual is performed in order for hunting/game to be successful. And for Tama to release iguana, deer, and pigs in the forest. In this ceremony the blood of the wild pig was scattered /sprinkled in the specified area in the Kaingin, for Tama to hear the wishes of the tribe.

Plate No. 4 Missionary Work in the Sites/locale of the Study.

Hongodgod

This ceremony is done when planting doma or root crops (camote, kalibre, karlang, ube, palaw, etc.) After clearing the kaingin/slush and burn farming, a nursing Mamanwa mother would institute the first planting. She should carry on her back the infant because it is believed that by doing so, harvest will be plentiful. Since Mamanwas believed in the presence of Diyatot and Anitos, (part of the spirit world) who usually dwell in the balete and tuog trees, during their Kaingin farming, these balete trees were spared. The saruk/tambajon/baylan should conduct a ritual so that the Diyatot and Anitos will not be angry of the kaingin. Moreover, they believe that there are two types of anitos: the Maradiyaw and Mataro (Good and bad). The good ones promote good harvest of the kaingin and kamotihan. The bad ones give illness or sickness. The observance of the cited rituals revealed that the Mamanwas widely practice their indigenous religious rituals which show
that even though there were who converted to Christianity they still retain their indigenous practice.

**Kahimonan**

The language used during the ceremony of Kahimonan/grand festivity, is a sacred. The Mamanwa considered it as revered and therefore will only be used during the Kahimonan. The researcher believed that the Binaylan prayer is both address to the souls of the departed and to their supreme God, Tahaw. The prayers or Binaylan is address to the dead to invite their presence in the ceremony. It safe then to conclude that originally the prayer is a nocturnal prayer. Once the Baylan/Tambajon uses the language, he is renewing his religious vow and his healing-religious prowess. The abundance of food and jubilant merry making after the prayer of the Baylan/Tambajon shows that the Kahimonan is a religious ceremony, a celebration of native religiosity that holds and binds them intact.

The element being sacred of the Baylan/Tambajon language during the Kahimonan is widely recognized by the Mamanwas. The use of the Binaylan language reflected the trance experience of the Tambajon resulted of Mamanwas respect to them. This they believe the Tambajon/baylan has a healing powers. The presence of an altar during the ceremony which is called “Bangkaso, or Uyagdok ” would offer an idea that there is a Christian element in it. However, it would be unfair for the Mamanwas if the researcher will conclude that the use of Bangkaso/Uyagdok or altar is of Christian in origin. The Kahimonan, made the settlement stands despite of hardship in lives. It is then a celebration of life, thanksgiving, merrymaking. Moreover, the use of Malong by the Baylan/Tambajon is of Bisaya influence. The religious function of the Kahimonan is shown of curing the sick after the Binaylan prayer was recited. In this part of the Kahimonan, it can be deduced that the Baylan/Tambajon is a faith healer. Non-mamawas may call it an animistic ritual, but among the Mamanwas it is a sacred ceremony. Let me cite part of the Binaylan language.

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Og Tahaw kad nu banwa
Kahabzen, gihud kaname
Kin-isa gihud banwa
Dahed, dahed, iza daza
Di dipi katahawan dizan katotawan
Dini kanmo kaotawan
Hagdan katahawan oralasser
Kapupuran hagdan katahawan
Hawag, hawag oapirpuan
Hawag, hawag kapupuan
Hilwa kadayawan banwa
Iko laga katahawan latubinaw
Mayazer, Mayazer tapopoan
Maloz, kaporoan
Manganop boog, bakit
Nogay nazehet kalsahawan
Surig, surig Tahaw.
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Translation:

God Tahaw visit the settlement
This day, please accompany us
All the time please accompany us,
For our protection
God who dwells in all direction
Tahaw who knows the flow
Of the river of life
Closely accompany us
Here in this life and after
Please protect your people
The ancestors know of your power
The ancestors are calling you
Please provide good harvest to the village
You just like fire, God Tahaw
Good in all generation
You have been good to our ancestors
You can weaken the bad spirits
You made bounties of the game
Please forgive the village
We will be faithful to you
God Tahaw.

The text spelled out that the Kahimonan has healing-religious content. It is an avenue of renewing the healing powers of the Baylan. At this end of the Kahimonan the researcher observed an influence of the Catholic rituals such as the use of candle of ceremony for example. The Mamanwas were very much grateful to the Baylan. As an expression of their gratitude they will offer dogs, sinagdan (spear), pig, chicken or anything that would express their gratitude to the Baylan for having been officiating the ceremony. Once the Baylan/Tambajon accepted the offering in the Kahimonan it finally ended. Besides, thanks giving elements, the kahimunan is also a celebration in welcoming a visitor or dignitaries.
INDIGENOUS INSTITUTION/ POLITICAL SYSTEM

The basic indigenous political system of the Mamanwas is the group. The group is headed by a Datu /Dakula or Hawodon or chieftain usually the eldest in the group (Malaas). The elder is the interpreter of the indigenous laws and norms. The Tambalon/Tambajon, /baylan are the group medicine men or folk healers. The Datu/Dakula is usually an arbiter, speaker during tribal meeting and a counselor. Its political system is largely based on respect for elders. These elders maintain peace and order in a group. Wisdom in interpreting tribal laws and taboos are noticeable in the Datu. From this political structure, flourish a peace loving Mamanwa community, quiet and distant from quarrels with the lowlanders. They don’t have the desire to seek for power. A Tambajon/Baylan works as a religious leader in the rituals mentioned and as the village herbalist. The Mamanwa society is an example of band level social structure (Jocano, 1996). There is no social stratification of the Mamanwas. Thus, all are equal and equal in actual putting (Tomaquin, and Tomaquin 2000). The traditional system of leadership has to adopt with the innovations of the changing time. They have adopted innovations of the indigenous political system. Thus, the community selects young and able Mamanwa as their leader or Dakula. The young blood ushers and offers changes to the traditional indigenous political system. These young people provide avenue of responsive leadership in their right to campaign for their welfare. They have adopted the following organizational changes below:

Kabudagan - An organization of Mamanwa women. It aims to empower them in issues relative to women’s welfare; it also provides a forum of their stand in the issue of ancestral domains. It further aims to have oneness of the Mamanwa women on other issues such as education and cooperatives.

Kalomonan - refers to the general assembly of Mamanwa community. It comprises the Mamanwa population. Kalomonan also serves as a forum of opinions of the community regarding socio-economic and political issues. A member of Mamanwa population is a member of kalomonan. The kalomonan organize income-generating activities such preparing their goods to be sold out during the tabo or market day.

Marigon - the organization, which support their claim of ancestral domain. These innovations revealed that the Mamanwas want to modify its indigenous political structure to suit the demands of the community. It further shows their willingness to adopt changes and to effectively affect their campaign of ancestral domain and other welfare/ benefits they deserve such as equal access to services of the government. The Mamanwas recognize that if there is a convergence of force or oneness of the community there is an easier campaign for reforms. The political innovations have made them more receptive to government programs apparently addressing more of the common problem of the village. Moreover, the Mamanwas’ unity further shows to strengthen their claim of ancestral territory or domain. The Mamanwa however considered the elected Barangay Captain as one of the leaders in the village in implementing governmental projects and order in the community.

The Dakula serves as head or village leader while the malaas, as council of elders. The authority of the Dakula covers a group/ specific community. In matters of tribal norms, taboos and customary laws, the opinion of the Dakula is sought. The Dakula/hawodon can be chosen based on his integrity, wisdom, mediation and conflict and dispute/ setting skills. The Malaas or the council of elders assisted the Dakula. Moreover, due to their decisive
move for more incorporation to mainstream body-politics, apparently, there are communities that the Malaas are only advisers to the Dakula.

Dakula is equivalent to Manobo concept of a Datu. The Dakula should be a Mamanwa within the group, married, not sickly, can speak the dialect of the lowlanders, sociable, and if possible must know how to read and write even in minimal degree, and at least can demonstrated leadership skill. In electing a Dakula, the community will convene for the purpose. The eldest in the group will preside in the meeting. The thanksgiving ritual is performed. Some or part of their customary law will be narrated then follow the election of a Dakula by merely raising their hands. The Dakula will serve in non-fixed term. He can be removed anytime if proven not worthy of the position. The duties of the Dakula are to serve as their leader on matters pertaining to interpretation of their tribal laws, to represent the village to the BarangayCaptain in matters and program for their welfare, to mediate community conflicts and in some extent, to judge. Moreover, if he could not solve the dispute, it will be forwarded to the BarangayCaptain. He is also expected to lead the village if there is incursion or attack from their enemies. He is also expected to be a keeper of traditions.

The Malaas, on the other hand are known as council of wise men an elders. They are expected to be adviser to the Dakula. The sarok or tambajon/baylan on the other hand is the medicine or the herbalist of the village. The sarok or tambajon can be a man or woman. It is believed that these men and women are good healers and endowed with mystic power to heal. A ceremony of institution of a Dakula is headed by the sarok/tambajon/baylan. He can cure Inbarang, or sick people who were victims of sorcery. The lowlander called them Tambajon. He uses oil with saliva and others to remove illness. Not everyone can be a saruk/baylan - only those with healing powers and had dreamed of supernatural herbs can be one. He is also a buyagan, meaning a person can cause curse to person’s under-estimating his wisdom. The Tambajon/baylan is also keepers of traditions. His knowledge of medicinal plants and indigenous medicine is indeed truly awe-surprising.

The Dakula is an innovative concept or name of the Datu. Before, the Datu is expected to be old or in late adulthood. Now they have changed in this practice. The Datu/Dakula is the one who is the most educated in the group and is certified and recognized as such by the NCIP (National Commission on Indigenous Peoples). A Dakula is considered as a representative of the Mamanwas to governmental institutions. He can, at least read and write simple communications.

The Tambajon / Baylan / Binulusan (Healers/Shaman)

The Tambajon/baylan is believed to be charmers and an herbalist. It is thought that they have several charms. It is a popular belief among the Bisaya/lowlanders population that they are endowed by the power of hisgut or barang, a curse or simply a form of sorcery.

The Mamanwas generally are peace loving. They are unassuming and tend to settle their conflict peacefully. The Tambajon/Baylan, in some extent is a peacemaker if the Datu seeks his services. Tambajon/baylan is an institution of Mamanwa society. It holds the community and provides its solid framework of the society. He is a protector of their indigenous religion. As a herbalist, his knowledge of indigenous/traditional medicine is exemplary including the knowledge in treating or curing snakebites. The Tambajon then is a healer--religious expert. He is an intermediary between the Diwatas and the settlement. The Tambajon/baylan
becomes through his own effort or through a visionary experience. He is an expert of the indigenous prayer (Tud-om), the Mamanwa shaman, whose influence of culture is noticeable. He is highly respected in his spirituality as intermediary to the temporal world to the Paradise (Katahawan). The Tambajon/Baylan can directly receive communication from Tahaw, as the Mamanwas believe. He is the most sincere person in the village for he led the Kahimonan with deep respect to Tahaw. He is expert in the Mamanwa oral tradition and is endowed with wisdom of the Tud-om and the code of religious vow of the Tambalons or the Binaylans. He is expected to be honest in dealing with the community and with the Bisaya. Aside from being keepers of traditions and tribal mythology, the Tambajon received his vow directly from their god Tahaw. The Tambajon has exclusive prayers known as Tinambajon or Binaylan and performs other ritual. He is expected to be the most moral person in the village.

Plate no. 7 Female Baylan/Sukdan (healer) with Kalibugan Children (Mixed descent of both Manobo and Mamanwa marriages).

The Tambajon/Baylan, in some extent is a peacemaker or in occasion where there are cases of conflict that could not be solved by the Dakula. He advises the Dakula in matters pertaining to tribal unity. Another word that describes the respect of the Tambajon is the concept of Binaylan, which means that the Baylan or Tambajon possess supernatural powers and that they derived their charms from Tahaw himself but they are believed to be not vulnerable to sorcery. During the Kahimonan the Mamanwas believe that the spirit of Tahaw possesses the body of the Tambajon and in such time, the body of the Tambajon cannot be pierced by a bullet. The primordial duty of a Tambajon is to keep the faith of the Mamanwas to Tahaw, their god. The Tambajon is a spirit medium, an intermediary to the world of the living and the spirits. As a medicine man and healing-religious leader, he is expected to reveal the message of their God Tahaw to the village using the Binaylan language. Moreover, in his healing-religious practice, he does not receive payment in his service of healing the sick only offering in kind.
Bagani

Despite the fact that the Mamanwas are more passive and peace loving than the dominant IP in the region. The Mamanwa offender will just be driven out as outcast. They have the concept of Bagani, similar to that of the Manobo. In fact, it is believed to be a Manobo influence due to its geographical proximity and intermarriages. Bagani simply means protector of the village. Today, they also called their bagani as Tanod influenced by the Bisaya concept of barangay police. The Mamanwa Bagani as a proof of his status wears a red turban. Today, the Bagani, as an institution, has diminished its stature. Mamanwa Bagani is also an institution. It protects the village from loggers. As warriors, they protect the peace and security in the village. Bagani is part of the local folklore. He is the folks’ brave man. He is an individual who leads the group in terms of tribal war in the past. Thus, he is the protector or defender of the settlement.

Indigenous conflict resolution and the Role of the Dakula/Hawodon

The Dakula or Datu has a direct authority in maintaining peace in the village. He is assisted by the elders (Malaaser) and his advisers, the Baylan/Tambajon. He is obliged to pacify or solve the conflict and will make sure it can be pacified so it will not be forwarded to the Barangay captain. In settling conflicts, it is their practice to call the attention of the parties in conflict. Both are allowing expressing their sentiments which are listened to and thoroughly considered. After weighing reasons the data offers solutions or verdict. A guilty person has to pay a fine, usually a pig. The pig should be slaughtered and a cup of blood should be consumed by the guilty party as a sign of guilt. In cases of murder, it should be forwarded to the Municiipyu or the police. In cases of conflicts between Mamanwa and Bisaya, it is barangay chairman who will have the jurisdiction of the case. Collectively, the farm field of the Mamanwa such as one in Sibahay is managed by the Dakula, which he subdivides among the community members. The same is practiced in Burgos and Hetaob, Manganlo and Lake Mainit. The following are some of their customary laws:
They pay respect to civilians and military authorities and the laws of the land. They always provide an avenue in conducting the *kahimonan* at least four times in a year they may be self-reliant or not. They respect the hunting rights of other tribes. They respect personal property. They avoid stealing, each should offer suggestions on how to solve village problem. They respect the elders and parents. They respect everyone in the village. They share food and meat gathered from hunting with the rest in the community. They respect women and children.

The *Dakula* maintain the peace of the place with the assistance of the *Malaas*. A guilty party will offer *Mangangade/fines*. *Mangangade* is in form of cash or property. In case there is a severe offense, the penalty will be *oyoyoanan* or forced labor is given. Forced labor will demanded by the relatives of the aggrieved party. The guilty party is also required to give a piece of land to the victim in cases of severe act of transgression or offense such as murder. The settlement will be done in the house of *Dakula*. The observance of its folk medicine and the institution of *tambajon, bagani, Dakulaare* clearly marked. The political organization of the *Mamanwas* traditionally is a band type (Jocano, 1996). A band usually consisted of 20-90 households. There is a loose tie in the band for there is no social stratification. The settlement or band is headed by a *Dakula*, equivalent to *Manobo* Chief or *Datu*. Though his authority is informal he exercises tremendous influence of the settlement. Sanctions such expelling from the band if there is a violation of tribal norms is very effective.

However, today there is an innovation of the role of the *Dakula*, gone were the days that he is the eldest in the band, today the most educated in the band can be a *Dakula*. More ever, the *Baylan/Tambajon* remains the adviser of the *Dakula*. Each band has its own *Dakula*, which shows each is independent with each other. The *Dakula* today further innovate their traditional leadership styles by forming a council of *Dakula* among the *Mamanwa* communities in Caraga which is registered and supervised by the NCIP. The innovation of this mode of leadership is due to the acceptance of the *Mamanwas* that they can effectively govern if they have this organization. The purpose of this innovation is to promote the campaign of their ancestral domain claims. This one of the requirement of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) so that they can be recipient of relevant government service and thereby encourage them actively in the economic and political system. This innovation also recognizes the role of *Mamanwas* women. It is in this reason they organized the *Mamanwa* women so they can be of best partner in their campaign for more rights stipulated in R.A. 8371 of 1987. The innovation of the *Baganiship* into *Tanod*, aims to protect the incursion of their traditional territory from miners and loggers.

**CONCLUSION**

The most important features on the study were herein summarized. The data below are the highlights of the findings.

The *Mamanwas* still practices collective division of food gathered from the forest such as wild animals which were being distributed to the community as part of their culture. The *Mamanwa* community or village is headed by *Datu/Dakula/hawodon* is widely respected. He has a charismatic leadership style, personality and wisdom. However, the band elects today’s *Mamanwa Datu*. Usually the individual who is schooled has bigger chances of becoming a *Datu/Dakula*.

They are peace loving individuals for their love of status quo and their avoidance of conflict with the lowlander or the *Bisaya* population. Like the *Manobos* and
Mandanays, the Mamanwas believe in spirit of the forest (Diwata/Anitos). Moreover, the manner of reverence differs. If they are suffering from famine, they perceived it is caused by the angry diwata. In this respect, indigenous ritual of Kahimonan or Tahawan should be performed. The supreme deity of the Mamanwas is Tahaw. This belief is clearly marked. When there is a calamity they perceived it is the anger of Tahaw. Christianity, as a religion greatly influences the Lubcon Mamanwa. It is their assumption that becoming a Christian is an acceptance and that they are acculturated to the mainstream culture. However, there are significant convert of Christian religion among the Burgos, Sibahay and Hetaob, Manganlo and Lake Mainit Mamanwas many part of their indigenous culture do not change. They have observed still their indigenous religion. The indigenous ceremony of Kahimonan/Tahawan is widely practice among the communities of Burgos, Sibahay and Hetaob, Manganlo and Lake Mainit. The Lubcon Mamanwas truly lost this practice due to Born Again conversion.

The Mamanwa shaman or Tambajon/Baylan is the person indirectly in charge as keeper of traditions. He is also a herbalist or healer. It is believed that he has charm and posses a healing -religious power. There is no stratification among the Mamanwas; their economic condition is more or less the same. The right of private and personal property is recognized. As a people, the Mamanwas are respectful to government authorities. Their high illiteracy contributed much of to its poor economic condition. Because of this, they could not run for public office. The Mamanwas are truly indigenous to their land, their forest and their rivers. Truly undeterred by the idea and concept of consumerism and lowlander values, their reverence of nature is manifested through deep reverence to Tahaw whose concept is shown with its protection of nature.

The Mamanwas are still engaged in food gathering such as game hunting and trapping. There are still wild animals, which are rich in protein source. The Mamanwas of Sibahay, Hetaob, Manganlo, and Burgos still leave in lean-to-like dwellings. Lake Mainit Mamanwas already build their houses pattern after the lowlanders. They have difficulty of having three meals a day. kamote, karlang, kalibre, palaw, doma are their staple foods. Rice is a good substitute for doma. Food is becoming nil or scarce, continued logging, kaingin by Bisaya population and wanton destruction of forest contributed to skin diseases and scarcity of food which lead to malnutrition which is the primordial effect because of the lack of food supply. The Mamanwas of Lubcon and Lake Mainit are shall we say “Better off” than the Mamanwas of Sibahay, Burgos and Hitaob and Manganlo. Lubcon Mamanwas build their houses like the Bisaya. They are engaged in poultry, piggery. The Mamanwas already accepted their tribal identity. They accepted the term Mamanwas, Mamaw, and Kongking, kalibugan ill-without feeling about it. Generally, the Mamanwas in the six communities are on the process of adopting the mainstream culture despite with their limitations. It will take long before they can equal with the Bisaya in terms of recognition, political role, and status and property ownership.

The significant differences between and among the Mamanwa communities provide insights and avenues on the extent of acculturation of the Mamanwas. Education has contributed to acculturation of the Lubcon and Lake Mainit Mamanwas. Adult literacy programs of Lubcon and Lake Mainit further fast track its acculturation. The observable aspect and patterns of its acculturation can be perceived further that it will delive the contribution of religion and adult literacy program. The acculturated Mamanwas of Lubcon and Mainit built or patterned their houses with the Bisaya. Burgos, Sibahay, and Hetaob. Mamanwas are still in their dait-dait, a windscreen structure. However, all of them or each household has its own home. The dait-dait is made of tikog, anahaw leaves and the post from hardwood. The flooring also is made
of hardwood. Sibahay, Burgos, Manganlo, and Hitaob Mamanwa still used Kaingin farming. None of them used the carabao in planting. Lubcon Mamanwas are indulged in coastal fishing, Lake Mainit Mamanwas in Lake fishing, hunting, lumber gathering, and raising chickens and pigs. The Mamanwas have their own basketry and handicraft. They weave Agsam and many kinds of rattan handicrafts. Caraga Mamanwas indigenous culture is rich in mystical elements and remarkable belief system. Their beliefs in Tahaw are clearly obvious. Tambajon/Sarak/Baylanis their medium. There are no initiation rites of Mamanwa’s boys and girls. The boys are circumcised like the Bisaya. The Lubcon and Lake Mainit Mamanwas are Christian community and abandoned their indigenous religious ritual and have transformed their lifestyle to that of the Bisaya. There are a high percentage of Mamanwa - Manobo, Bisaya - Mamanwa marriages who give to the rise of the Kalibugan term meaning half Mamanwa, Manobo or Bisaya. These intermarriages had affected their indigenous culture and made the enculturation process affected by outside influences. Mamanwas have poor inclination to education. Many of them are illiterate. This also due to the distance of the community to the village. Discrimination of the “Bisaya” population as manifested in the term as Mamaw, Kongking, lomon and Tagaejas have contributed further to their poor inclination to education. Generally, the Mamanwas of Caraga are not ready to let go with their indigenous lifestyle and culture. The shifts from subsistence economy to cash or money oriented economy have contributed further for their poor economic system. There is a near depletion of their hunting, fishing, and farming ground due to illegal logging, large-scale kaingin, mining in some extent poison the rivers. The Mamanwas are skilled in weaving baskets, rattan gathering and weaving agsam. The Hitaob, Burgos, and Sibahay Mamanwas, Manganlo adherents and beliefs in the indigenous religion are remarkable. Their refusal to abandon their indigenous religion Kahimonan, have also resulted to their desire to stay away from Bisaya villages or settlements. The Kahimonan/Tahawan religious activity is widely practice by the Mamanwas of Sibahay, Hitaob, Manganlo, lake Mainit and Burgos. They have considered the Kahimonan ceremony as a way of preserving their indigenous culture and to promote oneness of the tribe. The Baylan/Tambajon is an institution. It is widely instituted in the Mamanwa communities namely: Burgos, Hitaob, Manganlo, and Sibahay. Baylan has both healing -religious functions and also considered a keeper of traditions. He exerts a great influence to the Datu/Dakula and to the community and the individual Mamanwas. Shamanship, among the Mamanwas is clearly marked despite of integration of many Lumads of Mindanao. The Baylan/Tambajon is also considered a wise man. They also indulge in hunting, rattan harvesting, honey gathering, gathering wild fruits and vegetables but of a lesser scale now due to the activity of logging and mining. And resulted in poor harvest in the game. Trapping also supplemented their protein source. Food gathering is still practice by the Mamanwas. They also practice fresh water fishing and in some extent coastal fishing in the case of Lubcon and Burgos Mamanwas and lake fishing in lake Mainit. They also indulge in basketry, mat weaving as earning also for daily use.

The Mamanwa marriage is monogamous and is an extended patriarchal family in authority. In terms of residence after marriage is patrilocal. The Tud-om and the Binaylan language used by the Baylan/Tambajon is a sacred language. It is a good indicator and tool in understanding Mamanwas religious psychology. Poor acculturation of the Mamanwas is due to its strong attachment to its indigenous value system. It will take a long way before they will feel that they are Filipino citizen due to the poor governmental projects extended to them. They already accepted the word Mamaw without feeling ashamed about it. Their love to stay as a village/group revealed their desire of community unity and promote status quo. They are the original settlers of the region. Education and religious aspects factors are key determinant for its acculturation. If the Mamanwas are educated it can result in observable
changes of their economic lives. Significant difference in acculturation in religious aspect showed how they respond to cultural changes and modernization. The Mamanwas then are the most underprivileged indigenous peoples in Mindanao. The out-group in the political and policy making of the Philippines.

There is no social stratification among the Mamanwas. The medicine man and the headman functions are well defined. The medicine man or shaman (Tambajon) is expected not only as a herbalist but also keepers of tradition. The headman or Dakula authority is informal but highly respected by the village. The value and belief system among the Mamanwas was influenced by their worldviews. The belief of Tahaw, the supreme god is clearly marked. To this end, the Mamanwas are very religious people, basing it in their native religiosity. The Kahimonan religious ceremony is an expression of thanksgiving, merry-making and indigenous manner of worship. They are still practicing this ceremony.

There is high incidence of Mamanwa illiteracy. The Mamanwas in the six communities are poorly educated. Most of them can’t read and write. The lack of interest in education is mainly due to their lack of interest in schooling. The discriminating attitude of the Bisaya/lowlanders to the Mamanwa school children, lack of interest among the Mamanwa parents in sending their children to school. Extreme and abject poverty further contributed to their lack of interest in education. Mamanwa parents preferred that their children help them in the household chores and make a living rather than sending them to school is much acculturated.

The Mamanwa value system such as tribal unity manifested in the sharing of food to the whole band illustrated communal cooperation. Their adherence to monogamy illustrated their respect to the sanctity of marital union because the Mamanwas love peace, simplicity as a lifestyle, and respect for nature. Their reverence to nature while maintaining its sustainable use shows its dynamism in looking to nature as both a value and venerated or cherished this respect for nature is a good reason that could be cited regarding its respect to the bounties of natural resources.

Malnutrition has evident in the communities. Cold and respiratory illnesses are common in the said communities. Unsanitary practice contributed to the rise of these illnesses. The Kahimonan festivity which is the center of their indigenous religiosity serves as a unifying factor of the tribe oneness. It is also a thanksgiving prayer. It is an occasion for a Mamanwa shaman renews his vow as keeper of traditions and his healing -religious power. Tahaw is their omnipotent god. However, the Mamanwa has other diwatas or deities that are Tahaw’s servants. The Mamanwas are respectful people especially to local civil and police authorities. The Mamanwas’ economy is no longer a subsistence economy. It shifted to cash or market economy. It is affected by the social concept of the Mamanwas. Their acceptance of Christianity provides a new avenue of gregariousness. There is a gradual change then.

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