

**THE TIGKALASAN (TALA-ANDIG)* IN THE RAINFOREST
OF AGUSAN DEL SUR AND BUKIDNON BORDER
A Preliminary Culture-Construct**

Samuel M. Briones

The following work is an attempt to describe briefly some segments of the Tigkalsan (Tala-andig) Manobo culture as observed and experienced by this writer's research team. Fieldwork on this group was conducted in two summers—1975 and 1976 — and was supported by a modest grant from the University Research Center, Mindanao State University, Marawi City.

*Tigkalsan and Tala-andig refer to the same group of people. The term Tigkalsan is preferred by the Tigkalsan (Tala-andig) who in turn are called Tala-andig by their neighbors. *Tala-andig* by all accounts beginning with its etymology is derogatory. This paper uses the terms interchangeably. - Ed.

On the whole, the team spent roughly over a month in the area proper. However, prior to the entry into the domain of the people, the team did ethnography studies among the Umayamnon and Pulangion groups for three weeks. It was during this period that they were able to get a lead on how to reach the Tigkalasan.

It is therefore recognizable that there would be some gaps in our presentation of a broad configuration of the culture of this people considering time constraints. There were other reasons to be considered: Firstly, there was an intense fear about the presence of fugitives and armed elements roaming the area and sheltering in the nearby villages. Secondly, food supply could not last long enough owing to the distance from commercial centers. Thirdly, inclement weather made it impossible for us to visit other villages as torrential rains usually render the mountain sides slippery. However, this study could yet present some of the notable features of the Tigkalasan. Nevertheless, there are some novel features of their culture that need a more intensive stock-taking perspective by younger scholars.

The Setting

The Tigkalasan (Tala-andig) Manobo inhabit one of the most miserable habitats along the steep ranges linking Pantaron-Sumapay-Kabutungan-Minala mountains within the rainforest boundary of Eastern Bukidnon and Agusan del Sur Provinces. They live where other ethnically related groups are nearby dispersed. These neighbors are known as the Pulangion, Umayamnon, Bukidnon and the Tigwahanon. These people refer to the Tigkalasan as Tala-andig but they themselves (the Tigkalasan) would prefer the term Tigkalasan. Their neighbors also name them *Dibaloyon* (people from the other side of the mountain, referring to Pantaron), and Kalasanon (wild people). On the other hand, the Tigkalasan also refer to themselves as *otaw ta lagi-it* or "people of the steep mountains".

The research area could be reached via Saint Peter, the last barrio of Malaybalay. Saint Peter is inhabited mostly by Pulangion. From Saint Peter, the team hiked for three days often sheltering in abandoned houses along the way.

Owing to the remoteness of their habitat, the Tigkalasan have until recently been subjected to less cultural influence from the Dumagat and other lowlanders. The population of the Tigkalasan then could not be ascertained as only two villages were visited. There were several villages named but due to weather conditions and terrain, not to mention the distance between villages, the team decided to concentrate on only two villages.

The elevation on which the Tigkalasan live could only be estimated to about 4,000–5,000 feet above sea level. Temperature reading fluctuates between 64°F at its coldest and 70°F during noontime. Their houses are situated some 2,000 feet from the river but their drinking water comes from a spring which is halfway from their houses and the river.

Explanation of the term Tala-Andig

The terms *Tigkawasan*, *Dibaloyon* or *Kalasanon* are toponyms referring to where the people reside. The neighboring groups call the Tigkawasan more popularly by the term Tala-andig referring to a distinct characteristic that these people allegedly have in contrast to the other groups residing nearby. The etymology of the term can be gleaned from how these neighbors and other groups use and make meaning of the term. The Pulangion, Umayamnon and Bukidnon refer to them as *Tala-andig* or simply *Andig* to mean "people who lean" (probably from the local Visayan term *sandig*, "to lean in idleness").

Among the Muslim Maranao, they use the similar term Talandig as a derogatory reference to anybody who is lazy and idle. In addition, the Maranao also use such term to describe a person who is naked or barely clad.

The Muslim Maguindanao similarly use the term *Tala-andigan* to mean "bare and lazy". The Agusan Manobo use the term *Tiyandig* also to mean the state of "nakedness of the people".

With these comparisons, the term generally, would refer to behavioral traits that are prominent among a people and *describe* their distinct and marked "primitive" identity. Moreover, the term needs a little elaboration because such a name is a misnomer. It is more so because it characterizes these people as — naked or scantily clad; ignorant; lazy, idle or unprogressive; wanderer; feral; heathen; and thriving on the lowest subsistence level ever. To elucidate, if mountain tribes were to be classified according to hierarchy based on the rate of cultural advancement and openness to change, any group belonging to the lowest structure having the above-mentioned characteristics, are to be called *Tala-andig*.

In an oft quoted description of the Tala-andig is this statement: *'Iyan mga Tala-andig sa hadi tag pinaksuy. Hadig kaon ho bugas ta kalabasi da. Igkuwa sa bugas ha maputi ha ulod. Tagkapaglong ho asin agpulagoy ko amin otaw'*. ("The Tala-andig are those who do not wear clothes. Those who do not eat rice, only squash. Those who think that rice are white worms. Ignorant of the salt. Run when they see other people".)

According to the folklore and mythology of the Bukidnon in the central part of the province, the Tala-andig are an accursed race descended from a disrespectful son fated to lean against trees when hard rains fell and whenever nightfall overtook them; they were destined to be nomads. According to the Southern Manobo, the Ilianons in Davao del Sur, North Cotabato and Bukidnon borders, the Tala-andig are lazy and non-progressive. In addition, a derisory legend from the people of Kiburiao tells of the Tala-andig as descendants of a man with two reproductive organs whose union sired them. In the lines of the folk epic *Agio*, the Tala-andig is one who truly knows the forest.

There may be other groups referred to as Tala-andig and found in Maasam and Mirayon. Others may also be found in Kibuda, *Lantapan*, *Bukidnon*. Some claim that Tala-andig can also be found in Bangkud, Malay-

balay and Sungko, also in *Lantapan, Bukidnon*. The Tala-andig in this study are not the same as those later mentioned, thus, the term Tigkalasan to distinguish them from other Tala-andig groups. To date, the only outside contact that these people had was with the team of this writer and the initial contact was made on May 27, 1975.

General Physical features. Generally, the Tigkalasan are light brown in complexion. The normal height of males is 5'5" while that of the female is 4'8". The male population sport shoulder-length hair with a headband to keep it from being wind-blown. Both male and female submit themselves to tattooing and filing and blackening of the teeth. The male body frame is generally large while that of the female ranges from small to medium. No thick hairs are found in the breasts of the males nor on their legs.

Clothing and Adornment. The Tigkalasan wear scanty clothing on their bodies. The male wear woven abaca around the loins. The female wear similar cloth woven from wild abaca fibers as skirt and black-colored blouse although some are bare on the breast. The male tie a bag around their waist for their chewing paraphernalia. The bolo is an ever-present adjunct to the body. The arms are adorned with boar's tusk while the wrists are with *pugnot*, a medicinal aerial root. Even the female sport this pugnot. The female is more adorned with *salay* or beads enmeshed with the boar's bristle. Both sexes have tattoos on the arms, legs and breast.

Character traits. The Tigkalasan are generally shy and hide from new faces in their surroundings. They are not warlike. The only weapon they have is the bolo which is multi-purpose. These people would rather move away from their places than provoke trouble. It is understandable why they have moved deeper into the forest. Their moods vary depending on the occasion. They easily roar with laughter but can be found melancholic and depressed. They express their sadness and frustrations and love through the medium of verses chanted in archaic vocabularies.

History and Culture Change. *The Tigkalasan idea of creation.* Folktales have it that *Migtanghaga*, the creator, created *Minuna*, the first human being. *Minuna* sired *Palagsulat* and *Palamgoan*. *Palagsulat*, as the name denotes, is the ancestor of those who knew how to write (from the term *sulat*) and are apparently the *Dumagats* or the lowlanders who have gone to school or are learned formally.

Palamgoan on the other hand, is known as the ancestor of "the people of the forest" and thus, are in charge of the natural resources and bounty found therein. The Tigkalasan believe that they descended from *Palamgoan* and, therefore, are the heirs of the forest and own the goods within their realm. They claim that they have never gone out of their forest limits and just mingled with their neighbors in the mountain.

In a span of a year from the first visit of our research team to the second, the following changes had taken place: A good number of unmarried males and females had been lured into the lowlands to seek jobs. Some of them found themselves as daily wage or contractual weeders in the farms of the lowlanders. As compensation, they were paid in kind because they had no idea of monetary value. Payment were sometimes in the form of being fed by their employer and were given used clothing. Others preferred to be paid in the form of salt, sugar, canned goods and dried fish.

Many claim to have seen motorized vehicles for the first time. It is with experiences like these that they get to know about the value of money.

While working in the farms they learn new techniques of planting and about new varieties of plants. They bring back these plants to their mountain homes and start to propagate them. (During the second visit, the team found few stalks of corn, tomatoes, eggplants, beans and other leguminous plants).

While they mingled with lowlanders they get to attend benefit dances and watch the people dance different beats. When they get back to their homes they take pride in demonstrating what they have seen at the "other side". One of the youthful boys was even able to quote the "balak" (local verses) of the master of ceremonies during the benefit dance. One can imagine the impact of these influences on the Tigkalan youth.

Some men ventured in the logging companies. (The men whom the team met during the first visit were no longer residing in the village when we returned for the second time). According to the old folks left at home, the men were then working as cutters of trees or as forest guards for the logging companies operating near the area. They were paid in cash. Curiosity attracted them to the logging company. They wanted to find out what made all the noises until they found themselves employed as guides and drives for the loggers. One of the men interviewed said that he got P 4.00 for a day's work on a weekly basis. Most often they complained about their not being paid on time and that they had to return several times before they could finally receive their wages.

One female claimed to have gone as far as Butuan and had experienced riding a motorized pumpboat up and down the Agusan river. Her being able to go that far was through the invitation of a friend who belonged to the Higa-onon group living nearby and who had been to Butuan before.

According to Datu Pahagno, the team's guide and contact man, he came to know of the Tigkalan as a young man some twenty years back while he went with his father in their trapping trips. He remembered how they were living atop tree houses elevated high above the ground. He also remembered how they would run away when they saw other people. Now that Datu Pahagno has his own family he says he stayed put in his own farm which is a half-day's hike from St. Peter. Because of his knowledge of the forest and its people, he was assigned by the then Barrio Captain (now Barangay Captain) to serve as an arbiter of conflicts that may arise between the

different groups in the mountains. This is how he came in touch with the various villages. Datu Pahagno is not a stranger to them anymore.

According to the Tigkalan, aside from Datu Pahagno and the other tribal members with whom they barter, the team was the first "non-native group" that ever entered their area so far as they can remember. Thus, the first recorded contact with the Tigkalan occurred during this time when cameras took shots of them and lived with them for some time.

The Socio-Economic picture: Their practices and material culture. The Tigkalan are incipient agriculturists. Basically, they subsist on tubers or root crops (yam and sweet potatoes).

A. Tuber Farming. These root crops are augmented by wild plants, palm pith (ubod) roots, berries, birds' eggs and honey. They build their farms near a spring which are planted mainly to yams and sweet potatoes. Corn and palay are not popular to them. A few other edible plants can be found but are rare to find: squash, a patch of sugar cane and a citrus variety which may have been brought in from the outside. Members of the family, particularly on the distaff side, leave their houses and go to the farm every other day to dig those tubers for their daily consumption. Large reddish mushrooms and fungi also formed part of their diet.

It is interesting to note how they can vary their menu out of one staple—the camote. One way is simply boiling. The other method is to put more water in a kettle and put the pared camote in until it can be mashed and can be taken as soup. Still another way is roasting them on embers. Meals are taken only twice a day: one in mid-morning and the other at sundown. In between these meals and anytime during their waking hours they chew their *buyo* quid. A woven *kamuyot* (back pack) is one item that every individual, young or old, male or female cannot be found without. In it are found the quid ingredients: lime, betel leaf, areca nut, a pungent root, and the green fruit of rattan. These mixed ingredients are pounded inside a miniature bamboo mortar and pestle before it is chewed. Preparation is always through pounding.

At some part of the year they spend some time looking for a place to transfer if and when they decide to move out from their present homes.

B. Trapping and Hunting. Due to lack of metal implements such as spears and arrows, the Tigkalan do not hunt on a large scale. Instead, they set up traps and snares. Traps are fashioned from pointed stakes and strategically set up where tracks of wild game are seen. These traps are generally intended for wild pig and deer. Snares are intended for monkeys and wild chicken. In addition to the traps and snares, they also set up pits, and lures on trees intended for birds.

They possess a crude bow fashioned from a pliant wood and attached to a strip of rattan as its string. The arrows are made from reeds with detachable multi-pronged projectile points. This type of weapon, however, could not be used to hunt boars or deer but only fowls. Hunting and trapping are done only by men. Associated to trapping techniques is the Tigkalan's

great dependence on hunting dogs that serve as constant companions and retrievers. The dogs are very important domestic animals in the household. They are taken care of like members of the family and the master sees to it that they have their own share of the day's meals.

C. Fishing. Like trapping and hunting, fishing is done in small scale. It is also done very rarely due to the distance of the river from their houses. If and when they do decide to go fishing they have to go as a group — men and women and children together. A day's catch usually comprises of small species of fish, eels, crabs, frogs and shrimps. A method of fishing which takes much time is by probing — the use of the hands to feel under the stones. One has to be experienced for results. Still another way of catching fish is to throw a smaller stone on a larger stone to stun the fish under it. They do not use the hook-and-line-with-baits method. Nets and water goggles are virtually unknown to them. A more effective technique which they employ is damming a shallow portion of the river and bailing out the water from it until it is dry and empty. In so doing, they easily pick up the fish. They sometimes utilize traps made out of reed but this technique is found to be tedious. The day's catch is usually divided among the members of the fishing group.

D. Domesticated animals. The Tigkalasan possess domesticated animals for ritual and hunting purposes. They are not a part of the diet. These are pigs, chicken and dogs. These animals are acquired through barter with neighboring groups. The dog is still the same universal companion. Due to the role that it performs in their lives, it takes a special place in the house. It is given a name describing its own abilities. In the area, there were 8 dogs being kept. The pigs are kept in a sty up on a hill and is tended by a family. There seem to be a communal ownership of these pigs and chicken because each household contributes a portion of their meals to the person who feeds them. These animals are sacrificed when a member of the group is sick. They are offered as propitiatory gifts to the spirits believed to have caused illness. After an animal offering only then could the people partake of the meat. Eggs are also used as ritual objects. They are not eaten but are left to hatch.

The Tigkalasan claim not to have seen a horse, cow or carabao. One anecdote tells how one of the members wandered outside of his mountain boundaries and came upon a carabao wallowing in the river. The native's immediate reaction was that of fright because he mistook the carabao as a giant crab with the horns as its pinchers. The Tigkalasan keep several *limokon* (wild pigeons) which to them are omen birds.

E. Division of Labor, Age and Sex. The following are activities strictly for men: felling of trees, trapping, hunting, snaring, fetching firewood, building houses, making and trading tools and weapons, rope, wooden utensils, musical instruments, ornaments and ceremonial objects. On the other hand, the women have the following assignments: digging rootcrops, carrying loads, fetching water, preparing and cooking food, weaving mats, blankets, back packs and clothing; and nursing infants. Fishing is common to both. At times,

however, there is overlapping of duties wherein females or males perform the chores of the other for convenience. Division of labor by age deals with the enculturative processes subjected of the young ones by the adults in preparation for the eventual taking over of their respective tasks both at home and in the field. The young are gradually introduced into the various activities of the adults by demonstration and imitation so that whatever trade and skill they develop could be perpetuated by incoming generations.

F. Handicraft and Barter. An important economic endeavor upon which the people put a high prize is the trade and barter of woven materials. In addition to their respective roles, the men gather the reeds and fibers of the wild abaca plant and strip them in a crude wooden stripper. After the fibers have been stripped the women take over the job of dyeing and weaving them on equally crude loom. Items commonly woven are: blankets, backpacks and mats which are highly sought after by other groups. They also weave skirts and loin clothes for themselves. These finished products are traded by men with goods of equal value which are not found among them. The valuable items may be metal pots, pans, bolos, spears, pigs, chickens and colored beads. Lesser valued items may be salt, sugar, needles and thread. In addition to these woven materials the men also trade rattan, resin and honey. If and when there is more than enough supply of sweet potatoes, they, too, trade them.

It is through the barter system that they get in close contact with other people and it is through these groups that they accumulate most of their personal and household properties. Once an initial contact is made, a series of transactions follow. It is also through these transactions that they come to know about the outside world. Thus, it is at this point where adoption and borrowing of new ideas and behavior take place. Before the advent of contact with outsiders, there seem to be no metal vessels that they could speak of. Most of their food were roasted or broiled by wrapping items inside leaves and putting them on the fire or ember. During the team's first visit, only one metal pan and axe were noted. These items were claimed to be a result of barter. Even their present bolos were said to have been accumulated through barter. Until the last visit, eating containers were throughs fashioned out of the fronds of the wild palm. There were a few porcelain plates but they were kept as prized possessions since there is not enough for everybody's use.

The inventory of material equipment in the household was very meager. There is the absence of pottery. Fire is kindled by striking a stone flint and a piece of steel which produces sparks which are in turn caught in a powder-like combustible material taken from the fronds of the *pula* palm tree.

The combustible material they use for kindling is called *bahok*. When the *bahok* starts to burn it is transferred to a black bundled and braided object of hairlike structure called the *bano-ot*. It is like a torch and easily produces flames. Fire is preserved with utmost care by feeding the hearth with logs big enough to be accommodated in the pyre. After cooking food they

do not douse off the ember with water but they cover the ember with ashes ready to be used in the next cooking time.

Some containers are made out of woven reeds that grow in the area. Most containers, however, are made out of the barks. Water is fetched in bamboo with three or four nodes. On the rafters hang their wooden weapons and sharp bamboo stakes used in trapping. Over the fireplace are skulls and jawbones of deer and wild boars. The few clothing and other personal items which they have acquired through the years are kept in a special container and placed in their respective nooks.

House Types

The Tigkalan have three types of houses. The first type is a multi-layered flooring with multiple posts and a notched log as stairs. The first layer is the main platform which is in level with the hearth. The second layer is an area where they sleep. The third layer is another sleeping space but mostly used as a look-out post and it is always situated near the entrance. Meals are cooked and eaten on the first layer. This type of house is semi-permanent.

The second type of house is built high up on the trees some 30 feet to 40 feet above the ground. The ladder is made up of large vines. There were two existing tree houses in one village still being utilized at present. These houses are built that high to serve as watch tower.

The third type is a small shack in the farm lot built so close to the ground. The first two types have tree barks for roofing, walling and flooring, while the third type is roofed and walled with thatched materials. One informant mentioned that the tree houses were the predecessors of the earth-bound ones. The present houses could be a result of borrowing from the Umayamnon group.

Social Stratification

There is no distinct social structure among the Tigkalan. The only divisions are the age levels and sex identifications — young, old, male, female. Children from infancy to age ten are referred to as *mga bata*. The unmarried young females are called *laga* or *haga* while unmarried males are called *malaki*. Those who are thirty years of age and above are called *büyag*, (old). There seem to be the absence of a leader or a *datu* although a title of *datu* is attached to the name of a person as a title for respect for the older ones. In this case, we can probably say that there are no masters, slaves or servants. Decision is made by a group of elders regarding the general welfare of the group but individual decision is acceptable if the person making a decision is mature enough to know what he is doing.

Kinship System and Family

The Tigkalan trace their kinship relationships bilaterally along father and mother lines. Just like any other groups they represent an extended family network. A household is usually composed of three generations where the grandparents co-exist with the grandchildren under one roof. The extended family also includes aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces. The aged are taken care of by the younger members. The head of the family is the father with the mother serving as his manager of house activities. Residence pattern is bilocal wherein the newly married couple take turns in living under the roof of the male and later in the female domicile. There seem to be dominance of the male among the Tigkalan. It is also quite probable that they are practicing in-breeding due to the fact that their physical and facial features are almost always alike and that they are almost always related to one another. It may be due to the fact that they are far from other groups where they could take mates from. They use the teknonymic system in referring to the father or the mother by using such terms as *Amay Boksing* or *Idang Boksing*. *Boksing* in this case is the first child and parents are called and identified by the name of their first born.

Community and Political Life

The community is composed of a hamlet whereby two or three houses are grouped. Their nearest neighbor are mountains apart or some hours of hike apart. There are no datus among them. The man who is the most capable could be considered as the quasi-leader but not necessarily dictating his wishes to his members.

Normally, the elders are obeyed because of their wisdom and experience attached to being old. They do not have a very defined set-up politically perhaps due to the fact that they are semi-nomadic. Their length of residence in one area depends on the resources found therein and favorable omens. If and when there are signs of ill luck, they leave the spot even if they have just built a new house. (*Please see discussion on the Kalin' tala-andig ritual*).

Transportation and Communication

The only means of conveyance that the Tigkalan have is a wooden raft which they use when they cross rivers and when they go fishing. There are no draft animals for load bearers owing to the terrain of their mountain abode. Travel is by means of traversing by foot. Aside from a few counted ones, most of the Tigkalan have never been borne on any form of transportation medium.

Their means of communication is verbal with some use of non-verbal signs. Messages are carried by word of mouth. In some instances they

use knots along the trails to denote that they should not enter further a certain point. Or when a knot is placed at the door of a hut, it may mean no entrance allowed. One rare feature among the Tigkalan when it comes to non-verbal communication is the tapping of heads which has never been noted among other groups before. It is a semi-conscious way of reacting to a joke or a story which is similar to our way of clapping our hands in applause to a performance or showing disdain to a mediocre act. When they enjoy your jokes or your stories they all tap their heads to show appreciation. On the other hand it may also mean sneering and dissatisfaction if they do not like the tenor of the story or the joke. The sound of the tapping is loud enough for one to hear at some distance. If they tap their heads they accompany it with an expression like *Eee-ai* or *Aki-ak*. This distinguishing feature was described in an article written by this author in the UNIRECENT, a monthly newsletter of the University Research Center.

Men and women communicate their feelings and emotions through chants performed in archaic verses. When they walk in the mountains and they lose track of each other they yell a certain sing-song call just to see where the direction is and how far the other fellow is from the other.

Religious Beliefs and Practices as seen in the Kalin'tala-andig Ritual Observance

A word of caution: because of the very limited time spent among the Tigkalan and due to the clandestine performance of the Kalin'tala-andig ritual, only a cross-section of the belief is therefore available. These data were provided by two oldsters-Sida and Apo. The ritual contains paganistic and animistic elements. The term *kalin* would perhaps mean "in the true manner" of the Tala-andig. The ritual carries with it a number of taboos: It is taboo for outsiders to penetrate into their territory especially if one is wearing the habiliments of a modern man like cameras, hats, shoes, belts and the like. It is taboo to marry outside their own group. It is taboo to trespass forbidden areas designated as private. It is taboo to cut trees without first invoking the guardian of the forest and many other don'ts. Most of these taboos are deeply interwoven into their economic order. Thus, to violate any of them would mean ill luck to the people or to whoever transgressed and it is always necessary to offer some sacrifices in a ceremony to ask for atonement.

The Kalin'tala-andig observance is the all-pervading belief and the controlling factor that governs the rule of conduct and life among the Tigkalan people. It is the belief in the god who watches over the hunting dog. When the ritual is celebrated, the dwelling places of the people are closed to any outsiders because as stated earlier, the presence of outsiders may mean ill-luck and may bring bad results in their hunting and gathering activities. The intrusion of an outsider into their hallowed grounds may bring about scarcity of food and hunger.

Reference was made earlier to the descendants of Palagsulat and Palamgo-an. The Palagsulat descendants are referred to as the Banwa-on or "people from the town" while the descendants of Palamgo-an are those who inhabit the forest and also think that the forest is their own where no one should trespass. The Palagsulat descendants are usually the ones who fool the Palamgo-an descendants to the point of depriving them of their own habitat thus, the repulsion towards strangers in their area.

The ritual of Kalin'tala-andig is always performed in a place where no man ever tread before to uphold the sacredness of the observance. This area where they hold and perform the ritual is to be the next area where they hope to stay for the next succeeding years. Again this behavior shows the mobility of the people. It is unfortunate, however, that nobody among the team ever witnessed the actual ritual. The elders simply did not allow any outsider into the areas of Bagol and Tigbaw mountains because the prohibition days of the Kalin'tala-andig were not yet over when we arrived. According to our informants-Sida, Naybuskag and Manhikayan, the rules of the kalin'tala-andig are as follows: (as translated)

"After the Kalin'tala-andig ritual is performed the first five games caught must be butchered and eaten outside of the *lawig* (hut). No women are allowed to partake of the first five games bagged. However, the next five games caught will also be butchered and eaten outside the house as before but this time the women can join. Reasons for the exclusion of the women from partaking of the first five games is that women are considered impure because they bleed (menstruate) every month".

So far these are the only data we could glean from the ritual. Nevertheless, many superstitious beliefs are common features of the observance. Some notable manifestations can be seen in the following cases in point:

- 1) Before embarking into any journey one has to invoke the guardian of the forest by chanting some prayers and offering some metallic and porcelain objects so that the trip would be safe and successful;
- 2) Thunder and lightning are ominous signs that somebody has violated the ritual thereby making the guardian angry. Whenever there is lightning and thunder the people gather around the fireplace in silence and throw salt into the fire and shout "Shawi";
- 3) When they build a clearing or a house and somebody gets hurt or wounded it is an omen to forego the plan;
- 4) When a big tree is felled, they have to put an egg on the stump to appease the spirits residing in them.

On the whole, any little anathema to peaceful existence is a violation of the edicts of the Kalin'tala-andig observance.

Illness is attributed to the evil workmanship of unseen spirits. For this reason, each Tigkalan possesses a *ladawan* (a wooden anthropomorphic image). This image takes the personification of the evil spirit to which the ailing person gives some offering. The offering usually consists of buyo-quid

wrapped in cloth and fastened to the head of the *ladawan*. If one suffered from stomach trouble, the same offering is tied to the abdomen of the image. The *ladawan* is usually placed at the foot of the tree near the house.

This ritual as warned earlier appears to be sketchy and there is the need to look deeper into it as it seems to be all-important to the entire cultural configuration and character of the Tigkalan.

Education or Enculturation

Education among the Tigkalan is purely informal and incidental. Training is by demonstration by the elders to the young and showing how an act or job is done. Due to the remoteness of their mountain abode and their isolation nobody ever attempted to venture there. Schools are unknown to them. No missionaries and social workers have ever set foot on their land unlike other groups. As an observer, one can see the pathetic situation regarding their being illiterate not to be able to write or read but knowing that they prefer this kind of life makes one think whether being illiterate is an advantage. Most of the things a young one has to learn are those that have to do with livelihood and he learns them gradually as he grows older and is being shown various methods and means of performing these chores. In the process it becomes automatic and rote until they mature.

The enculturative processes as a universal principle takes its special place among the Tigkalan since it seems to be the only means of transferring the knowledge of the old to the younger generation and becomes an important cultural trait of the people. Thus, one can see that the father and the elder brothers of a boy would be expected to teach the younger one how to hunt and set up traps and even to fish. He is also told that there are several rules one has to observe before undertaking any endeavor. The values of the adults are transfixed on the young also in terms of their folklore, songs and other cultural elements. In this manner, too, will it be assured that such cultural institutions are kept among them and can be a source of their own identity as a population.

Even child-rearing acts are important because one can easily interpret and project the behavior of the individual by the way he has been reared as an infant. His toilet training, weaning stages and other interactions are important in this study. His effectivity as an adult will depend on how he was positively or negatively reared. In a nut shell, one can expect that the training of the young is a result of the transfer of values from the old and their effectiveness can depend on the intensity of these processes in enculturation.

Health and Welfare

Illnesses are believed to be caused by the unseen spirits who have been trampled on or caused by gods whose injunctions have been violated. Treatment of these various maladies can only be done by propitiation

and sacrificial offerings. The common sickness that could be found among the Tigkalan are the following: reddening of the eyes, headaches, stomach upsets and other digestive disorders. Fever and ague are very common, too, and they resort to medicinal herbs. The forest is the source of their herbal medicines and they seem to know all the plants that can be used as treatment to almost all types of illnesses that may afflict them. Aside from these common sickness, they also suffer insect bites or snake bites. Leech bites are warded off by a root of a certain tree that has a red sap. It is a very potent liquid that also wards off other stinging insects. For major tragedies like hunger and other disasters they resort to the kalin'tala-andig observance as a cure-all. Some have a way of treating fractures as a result of falling.

Still another common illness and affliction is the *tinea flava* on their epidermis. There were a few cases of goiter and one case of what appeared to be tuberculosis. Apparently, mothers have not taught the girls properly how to equip themselves during menstrual periods. These people are left entirely on their own without any benefit of modern medicines or professional medical practitioners. This may explain why there are very few of them which may be due to high mortality rate. According to Sida, the oldest male, there are about 77 of them within the confines of their villages. We only saw about 26 people. There seem to be no traditional medical practitioner among them who is summoned to cure those who are sick but they are much concerned individually. The presence of a medicine man or woman has not been noted but consultancy with the oldsters is sought regarding cures.

Customs and Traditions

To them birth is a welcome event because it means added manpower to the group. It also places the woman in a special situation showing that she is not barren. Courtship, according to Bangkalawan and Manhikayan is very casual where if a young man gets interested on a girl, he seeks the permission of the father and talks to the girl's parents for the marriage to be arranged. Marriage is monogamous although the men are thought to be allowed to marry more than one wife. A woman can marry one man at a time. Polyandry seems to be absent among the Tigkalan. Marriage ceremony is very simple. After the necessary gift exchange has been done and the date is set they agree on where to have the ceremony. Most of the time it is in the residence of the female. A chicken or two are slaughtered and the blood is allowed to drip on the hands of the bride and groom. The eldest man performs the ceremony and he is the one who pronounces them as husband and wife. The pattern of dowry giving is by gift exchange where both parties give to one another. The boy's parents would give a bolo or a bow and arrow to the parents of the girl and the girl's parents are expected to give a woven *lungkayab* (blanket) to the boy's parents or a *kamuyot* (back pack). Residence in the first years of marriage is matrilineal.

and then they move to the boy's parents making it patrilocal until such time that they can build their own independent house, making it neolocal. The marriageable age is between 11-19. One seldom finds a girl above twenty to still remain unmarried.

Death is a result of illness and is considered as a punishment from the *tulo-owon* (the worshipful) or a sign of *gaba* (retribution) due to disobedience of the old folks' injunctions. The Tigkalasan believe in the flesh-eating *busaw* (evil spirit) who prey on human cadaver. They usually inter the dead under the house and then they leave that house and move to another location where they have to start all over again. The former house is no longer fit to live in. The spot where the body is intered is usually built with a house-like structure where they offer betel and other porcelain gifts. Belief in the afterworld was not recorded as they seem not to have a good understanding of such.

Art and Culture

The music chanted in archaic verses is the most popular form of entertainment among the Tigkalasan. Their chanting depicts the kind of day they went through and what they expect to happen in the coming days. Sometimes they chant about some funny incidents. They also compose other impromptu songs as they go along. The only musical instrument noted was a mouth flute called the *lagtab* made out of bamboo.

Decorative art can be found in their tattoos and on woven materials. Their colors are composed of red, black, purple which can be seen in their handicrafts. The men do a little carving on wood and the objects of their art is usually the frog since they believe that the frog is the symbol for rain. Other artistic designs are geometric in form as can be seen from their tattoos on their bodies. The frog is again a popular motif in tattoos. They also use the anthropomorphic design in their art. They have a sense of symmetry in their lines. The oral literature is not as rich as those of the Bukidnon and the Manobo. It appears that their folklore is patterned or is a variant of the folk epic *Agio* due to the characters in the said epic. Their language is approximately 75% Binukid which is spoken in the Province of Bukidnon. One word can have many different meanings. For example the term *mahagsay* could mean good, sweet, pretty, delicious, easy, better or best. In the Binukid there are appropriate terms for the above-mentioned adjectives. In a sample comparison we have the following table:

Binukid	Tigkalasan	English
Maayad	Mahagsay	Good
Maumis	"	Sweet
Maragway	"	Pretty
Malumo	"	Easy

Binukid	Tigklasan	English
Mananam		Delicious
Agkatalong	Agkabundol	Worried
Agkahibol	”	Irritated
Agkapaok	”	Angered
Bahag	Talibod	G-string
Iyap	Bilang	Count

They seem to have no form of any written symbols or paleographic elements.

Concept of Property

Objects considered as personal property are those that they usually wear and their bolos. It includes their own kamuyot for their betel quid paraphernalia. The ladawan is also a personal property. A small box where they put their beads and other trinkets are also their personal property.

There seem to be a little inventory of their personal belongings. As for their communal property they have delineated that the forest and the springs and rivers are for everybody's use. Nobody is prohibited to hunt, set up traps and fish in these areas since what is gathered is shared by all the members of the extended family and also with the neighbors. Traps and snares can be borrowed and loaned. The camote patch and squash gardens are for everybody's helping. Inheritance of material objects and treasured items go to the first born whether boy or girl to be later determined as to who among the two can have the object being bequeathed. When an object is borrowed or lent it is always returned. Not returning a borrowed item would mean an insult to the lender. Fruit trees and other edible plants are for everybody to gather. Cooking vessels and the hearth is also communal.

At this point, special mention is given to the hearth because it is the center of activities in a Tigkalasan household. It is here where they all gather in the cold of the evening and where they spread themselves to partake of the warmth it gives during the night. It is here where they gather to chant some songs and it is here where they invoke the forgiveness of the angered gods whom they appease. Aside from its purpose of cooking their meals the hearth is also a means of preserving meat by the process of smoking since it is always constantly lit. It is also the source of lamination during dark nights. It is also here where they make their lime and heat their tobaccos before they start chewing their quid. Lastly, it is worthwhile to mention that there is a sense of respect to personal property and to wives.

Recreation and Entertainment

The Tigkalan have their indigenous games. The most popular among the men is the *hayanga* (finger wrestling), *bag-od* (arm wrestling), *kagpa-ay* (body wrestling), *laksuwa* (road jump) *limpinuad* (head balancing) and *pulalagoya* (uphill racing). They also play a game of abaca fibers known as *kalay-kalay* (crazy man's game) where they entwine the fibers into various loops resulting in several tricks. Among the girls, weaving is a favorite pastime. They do not have as much games as the boys. Their activities are inclined towards the dictation of the mother who usually need their helping hand in little chores. The girls are expected to look after the younger siblings and thus not have much time to play as the boys. In one occasion both boys and girls played a game of *sipa* made out of rattan which they kick into the air and followed by another person who takes his turn to the rattan ball. The girls are considered to be better chanters.

It is also worthy to note that the Tigkalan do not live in a hurried pace and they take their time to do what they intend to do. Even in travelling they always take their time to sit and chew their quid and converse before they proceed.

Puberty and Initiation

The men are circumcised. They regard this practice as a taboo to which only the Banwa-on (people of the town) observe. Young men and women entering their adolescence submit themselves to tattooing or filing of the teeth because they believe that it is a part of their bodily improvement, decoration and adornment. This painful process of filing and blackening of teeth seem to be universal but among the Tigkalan, they believe that if you do not file and blacken your teeth you are likened to a dog with white teeth. Aside from tattooing, filing and blackening of teeth, we were not able to observe other rites of passage or transition rites among the Tigkalan. A girl is considered marriageable after she has first menstruated. The team did not observe any child betrothal. This is one area where not much data was gathered. It may be an interesting topic to pursue later on.

Numerals and Measures

The system of numeration is base ten. They can only depend on the system where they could only count from one to ten. Thus, we see that one is *sagma*, two is *dalawa*, three is *talo*, four is *apat*, five is *lalima*, six is *anom*, seven is *pito*, eight is *walo*, nine is *siyam* and ten is *sampulo*. They count by tens, thus they say "*Sikay 'min pito ha sampulo, daw pito*" translated as follows: "We are seven tens and seven" referring to the entire Tigkalan population.

They reckon time by counting sunsets with the use of a *kuraw*. A *kuraw* is a series of knots on a strip of rattan with each knot representing a day. Every sunset a knot is untied or cut off to signify the passing of one day. When they are anticipating an important event, they also use the *kuraw* as a calendar.

They measure weight by comparison and by lifting. Quantity is measured either by handfull, basketful or bagful, depending on the situation and the object they are weighting or measuring. Sometimes they use sticks for counting and explaining the number of objects they are describing.

Armed Forces. The Tigkalasan are not warlike. Therefore they do not have an organized armed force. As mentioned earlier they would rather move into the jungle instead of getting into trouble with neighbors. They do not seem to have any enemies either. On the whole they are a peaceful conglomeration of incipient mountain farmers.

The Myth of the Tala-andig

Name of Informant: Luis S. Pasal, age 69 years old
Bangkud, Malaybalay, Bukidnon

The archaic word *Tala-andig* which is seldom used now cannot be applied to the group that speak Binukid because it is a derogatory term. The Tala-andig is a mythical race cursed by a mother of three sons. The story has it that: A mother with three sons wanted to test the love and respect that her sons had for her. One day when the sons were all out hunting she took off all her clothes. When the sons were approaching their house the woman placed herself above the stairs and pretended to be asleep. When the first son saw her mother naked and sleeping he tiptoed so as not to wake her up, got a cloth and covered her mother. The woman again uncovered herself after he had left. When the next son arrived he did the same. But when the third son arrived he did otherwise. He roared with laughter and derided his mother's nakedness. The mother woke, got up and said to his son "You are an ungrateful son. How dare you despise your mother! From now on you and your children and your children's children will never have a home of your own and you are to step out of this house today. You shall only lean and live in trees and take your shelter elsewhere when the sun is hot and when the hard rain is going to fall. You will never progress and you shall remain a *Tala-andig* for the rest of your life.

This explains why the term is derogatory.

Researchers in Bukidnon like Father Vincent G. Cullen, S.J. and William Biernatzki, S.J. and the scholars at the Summer Institute of Linguistics did not come across a Tala-andig tribe in the Province of Bukidnon. The

researchers in Bukidnon have always wanted to look for this group. According to Mrs. Ludivina Opena, she had been conducting researches in Bukidnon and has heard many stories of the Tala-andig in 1968, 1972 and 1973. She said we still have to look for and locate where this so called Tala-andig really exist.