The Making of Indigeneity: The State, Tribal Council and Grassroots Mobilization

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Abstract

Indigeneity is always in the making. But who defines indigeneity? What does indigeneity mean for Indigenous Peoples? How do various forms of power and resistance shape the notion of indigeneity among Indigenous Peoples? In this paper, I discuss the role of different social actors such as the State, the Tribal Council of Elders, Manobo Youth, and Indigenous activists in the "making of indigeneity". I focus on the Manobo-Pulanguiyén as one of the Indigenous cultural communities in Southern Philippines. I present various ways the Manobo-Pulanguiyen respond to the institutionalized form of indigeneity and assert Indigenous voice and cultural agency through multiple forms of political performances, cultural performances, resistance, and micropolitics in everyday life. I argue that indigenous power and grassroots indigeneity are crucial in the fight for self-determination, cultural recognition, social equality, justice, and social reforms.

Keywords: Indigeneity; Indigenous Politics; Manobo-Pulanguiyen; Political Subjectivities

Introduction

For many decades, Indigenous Peoples' involvement in articulating Indigenous identity and indigeneity has been among the most thought-provoking debates (Ludlow et al., 2016). The dominant discourse on the making of indigeneity points to the following: Western/colonial, the State foreshadowing Indigenous knowledge systems. Empirical data suggest that numerous social influences and actors, such as the State as a political authority, affect how indigeneity is made and re-made (Paredes, 2018; Morton, 2017; Lund, 2016; Bell, 2011). Like Lund (2016), I argue that the 'state' is always part of the "making of indigeneity" and that political authority is (re-)made through its successful exercise over an important issue concerning the social and political actors.

On the one hand, various research findings such as Simpson (2014), Bruyneel (2007), Keal 2003) and Havercroft (2008) show that Indigenous peoples assert the recognition of indigenous politics within the state. Whilst Bello (2019) argues that indigeneity is a contested term due to complications caused by how the national and international frame its definition and application, Anaya (2009; 2004) contends that these frameworks must be reconciled. Resonating with Anaya, my ethnographic material also suggests that there should be a dual arrangement in the autonomy in governance

and participatory engagement between the State and the Indigenous Peoples. However, it must be noted that indigeneity also reflects the concept of relationality and contextuality (Harris, Carlson and Smith, 2013). To elaborate on relationality and contextuality, some key concepts in this chapter delve into Manobo-Pulanguiyén's customary authority, micropolitics, indigenous power, and indigeneity in everyday life.

Several research studies have shed light on the fight for land rights, cultural recognition, and self-determination (Gaspar, 2017; Paredes, 2017; Alamon, 2011; Canuday, 2009). As Loong et al. (2023) argue, the fight for self-determination is influenced mainly by innumerable movements resisting colonialism, postcolonialism, capitalism, and development aggression (see also Gaspar, 2017; Paredes, 2017; Celeste, 2017; Medina, 201; Gatmaytan, 2005). In making sense of these themes, I am also drawing from Gatmaytan's work (2005) to discuss the opportunities and contradictions of nationalist representation vis-à-vis Indigenous representation. I also consider the intersectionality of variables such as but are not limited to a local political structure, Indigenous Political structure, a local-state relationship, and a capacity to articulate indigeneity (Hall, 1996). I also discuss how grassroots mobilization plays a part in the making of indigeneity by focusing on the various creative forms through community participation, cultural engagement, and the fight for cultural recognition and self-determination.

To elaborate on this chapter, I also attempt to incorporate the following notions of indigeneity: First, I discuss the framings of indigeneity through the lens of the Philippine State and how the opportunities and contradictions affect the Manobo indigeneity. Second, through Customary Authority, I explain how the Tribal Council of Elders and the Manobo Youth Leaders exercise Indigenous power and micropolitics in everyday life. I also elucidate how the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns, as political agents, respond to the institutionalized form of indigeneity. Third, I provide the lived experiences of mobilizing indigeneity, repertoires of Indigenous resistance and creative activism, and how these shape the political and cultural subjectivities of the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns. Finally, I conclude this chapter by focusing on how local-state relationships, customary power, and everyday micropolitics shape indigeneity's *making, mobilizing*, and *radicalizing*. Emphasizing these aspects of Indigenous micropolitical engagements can create and provide an in-depth understanding of the Manobo cultural agency in everyday life.

State Politics, Power and Institutionalized Indigeneity

As a governing institution, the Philippine State is crucial in conceptualising and making "indigeneity". The various agencies of the State assist in crafting policies, legal frameworks, and interventions, particularly on Indigenous Peoples' social, economic, and cultural welfare. However, some Filipino sociologists, anthropologists and Indigenous scholars argue that these state provisions and frameworks are profoundly influenced by the colonial, Western, and nationalist discourse on what it means to be Indigenous as well as the process of governing ancestral domains (Paredes, 2018; Gaspar, 2017; Gatmaytan, 2005; Aguilar & Uson, 2005). Conversely, my ethnographic material shows that as part of the State, the Manobo Tribal Council of Elders makes

sense of the national provisions governing indigeneity and exercising customary authority and indigenous power. Thus, viewed this way, the State and the Tribal Council are political agencies acting as social mechanisms for the Institutionalized Indigeneity. But how do the Philippine State and the Manobo-Pulanguiyen Tribal Council form part of the Institutionalized indigeneity? What means are utilized in the making of indigeneity?

Framings of Indigeneity: Discourse and Contradictions

Whilst the literature emphasizes that indigeneity has been subjected to different global and local state representations (Morton, 2017), I focus on two practices of Institutionalized Indigeneity: a) nationalist representation and b) indigenous representation. Drawing from the works of Coates, Trudgett, and Page (2021), this chapter explains Institutionalised Indigeneity that focuses on how the state and Indigenous people's frameworks must work together and should be reflected in practice.

Historically, indigenous resistance in the 1970s played a critical role in crafting constitutional laws, policies, and republic acts. These various struggles and resistances relate to the political, social, and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous regions, and cultures, which have become the basis for institutionalising Indigenous Peoples' rights. (Paredes, 2018; Gaspar, 2017; Alamon, 2011; Aguilar and Uson, 2005; Gatmaytan, 2005). For Manobo-Pulanguiyen, resistance movements and activism also relate to the battle for self-determination, cultural rights over ancestral domains, and reclaiming Indigenous heritage and identity (see more in Chapter 6). Thus, it is noteworthy that the State's institutionalization of indigeneity was the nation's response to the many years of resistance movements and indigenous activism (Deloria, et al 1996;l Gatmaytan, 2005; Aguilar and Uson, 2005). Through time, the State crafted constitutional agencies, strategies, and laws such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the 1987 Philippine Constitution, and the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Protection Plan (ADSDPP)[1] policing Indigenous rights over customary lands.

The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) is one of the institutionalised agencies that aims to protect the interests of Indigenous Peoples' land rights and claims. Another prime example of the state apparatus is the implementation of Republic Act No. 8371[2], also known as the Indigenous Peoples

[1] ADSDPP is the consolidation of the plans of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) within an ancestral domain for the sustainable management and development of their land and natural resources as well as the result of human and cultural resources based on their indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices. Such a program shall be the basis of the Five-Year Master Plan for ICCs/IPs (Fulgar, 2022).

[2] Republic Act 8371 is an act to recognize, protect and promote the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples, creating a National Commission on Indigenous Peoples,

Republic Act of 1997[3]. It further recognizes the state's obligations to ensure the continuity of the unique cultural expression of IPs/ICCs by assuring their full participation in the activities and endeavours toward health, education, and other areas of services making them responsive to the demands of their unique communities (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). The Republic Act aims to recognize, protect, and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples or the Indigenous cultural communities (ICC) in the nation (Aquino, 2020). Along with constitutionalising the Republic Act, a provision defines what Indigeneity, Indigenous, and Indigenous Peoples mean. The conceptualization of indigeneity aligns with the Indigenous Peoples' language, customs, traditions, and other *distinctive* cultural traits. Specifically, the provision states that Indigenous Peoples (IPs) or Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs) are:

> A group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others who have continuously lived as an organized community on communally bounded and defined territory and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed, and utilized such domains, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non- indigenous regions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos. ICCs/IPs shall likewise include peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations that inhabited the country at the time of conquest or colonization, or at the time of inroads of non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral territories (IPRA, Section 3h).

The definition of Indigenous Peoples focuses on the central themes such as territory or land, 2) cultural traits and performances, and 3) power and resistance. However, Canessa (2014) and Theriault (2009) argue that the State tends to "homogenize" Indigenous identity as products of people's histories of colonization and to romanticize the dispossession of Indigenous material and non-material cultures. Thus, that is where one of the state's contradictions lies. The act of homogenizing Indigenous Peoples connotes the exclusion of the different lived experiences, voices, and configurations of the making of indigeneity. It must be noted that whilst Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines are subject to colonialism, development aggression, oppression, and various forms of exploitation, their lived experiences vary from time to time and are shaped by their socio-histories, geography, and ecological

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Establishing Implementing Mechanisms, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for other purposes. (https://pcw.gov.ph/republic-act-8371-the-indigenous-peoples-rights-act-of-1997/?cv=1).

[3] This act was implemented and signed during Fidel V. Ramos administration in 1997.

landscapes. The multiple knowledge systems and cultural practices encapsulate distinctiveness and heterogeneity.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to consider that the IPRA law also stipulates the indigenous rights to develop, manage, and conserve their ancestral lands and ecological resources for their futures (Perez, 2019: Gatmaytan, 2005). This law tackles the problematic scenario of land ownership and entitlements. For many years, land titles have not been practised by Indigenous peoples because land ownership was subject to communal ownership within their customary laws (Gatmaytan, 2016; Gaspar, 2017). However, this practice has led to many Indigenous Peoples as victims of deceit, fraud, and land grabbing (Paredes, 2018). Thus, the IPRA of 1997 was institutionalized to protect IP rights on land ownership. As an illustration, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) recognizes Indigenous people's rights to land ownership. Section 12 of the Indigenous Peoples Republic Act 1997 stipulates the "option to secure certificates of the title under Commonwealth Act 141 or Land Registration Act with the following requirements: a) they have been in continuous possession and occupation of the same in the concept of ownership, b) such possession was since immemorial or for not less than thirty (30) years immediately preceding the approval of the law, and c) it is uncontested by the members of the same ICCs/IPs". The provision also specifies Indigenous Peoples' rights to land entitlement, which is done by securing the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). Although the IPRA law stipulates the indigenous rights to develop, manage, and conserve their lands and ecological resources for their futures, the ancestral domain still belongs to the State. This absolute power granted by the constitution governs and delineates these resources to the nation's constituents. Therefore, the State has the final say over land controlled by its constitutional powers (Perez, 2019).

Following the implementation of IPRA law for many years, the fight for cultural rights, recognition, and self-determination continues to be the fore of Indigenous Peoples' struggles. Conversely, Eduardo (2017) found that there is a limited mechanism to promote awareness among IPs on the framework of the IPRA of 1997. As Gatmaytan (2005) contends, the institutionalization of IPRA 1997 is an attempt by which Indigenous people's rights come to terms within the framework of the nation-state. He also argues that the process of claiming ancestral domains falls within the bureaucratic power of the State. He summarizes his points contradicting Indigenous people's rights: 1) the State's extension over ancestral domains, 2) the State's response and imposition of social construction about Indigenous peoples treated as homogenous groups, and 3) the disruption of local or indigenous praxis on ecological management. Resembling Gatmaytan's argument, quite a few of my interlocutors know that the IPRA 1997 affirms state power and control over ancestral domains. For example, one of the Tribal Datus shared that whilst the State grants the Manobo-Pulanguiyén ownership of their traditional lands, ancestral domains are still subjugated to the power of the State. The law instructs that Indigenous Peoples can cultivate their lands but do not have the right to sell them because the constitution states that ancestral lands are domains owned by the State. However, there are reports

or cases in which the traditional lands of the Manobo-Pulanguiyen have been sold out to various private entities (see Celeste, 2017).

The Tribal Council of Elders

Alongside the State institutionalization of indigeneity, the Indigenous Peoples are also political conduits who assert their customary power or traditional authority. Like the State, the Tribal Council also plays a pivotal role in realising the indigenous quests for freedom and cultural rights. Under Republic Act No. 8371, customary law is defined as a body of unwritten and written rules, usages, customs, and practices traditionally and continually recognized, accepted, and observed by the respective ICCs/IPs (IPRA, 1997). Customary laws are executed through but are not limited to practising the traditional ways of everyday politics, such as showing respect and obedience to the Tribal Council of Elders, enacting the traditional methods of conflict resolution, and performing religious rituals to maintain harmonious relationships with other ethnolinguistic groups, etc. The Tribal Council of Elders, under the customary law, serves as political figures to exercise traditional authority towards the community members. The Tribal Council of Elders and community members are also pivotal in safeguarding cultural heritage and identity.

Debunking the Concept of Tribe?

Some anthropologists studying Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines critique the notion of "tribe" or "tribal" as there is no such concept found in the nation. Indigenous Peoples are treated as ethnic groups who had systematic political, economic, social, and religious structures before the Spanish colonialization (Carino, 2012). Historically, explorers and scholars from Europe tend to use the term "tribe" or "tribal" to associate it with the word "indigenous", connotating primitiveness and not advanced cultures. Thus, Filipino scholars' critical stance on the term "tribe" or "tribal" is an act of debunking the Eurocentric point of view of indigenous groups. The Eurocentric notion of "tribe" also does not resonate with how Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines carry out or perform their indigeneity. Yet, in this context, it is called the Tribal Council. The use of the term "tribe" or "tribal" can be explained through translating or approximating the concept into the Indigenous language. In the Manobo or Binukid, "tribe" is translated as *tribu*. And the term *tribu* also means *lumad.* In English, *lumad* means indigenous. In addition, the concept "indigenous" traces its origin to the old Latin word *indu,* which means within. The closest meaning to this Latin word is *native* or *nitibu* in Cebuano. This would mean that "indigenous", "tribu", "lumad", or "nitibu" means coming from a particular land as original dwellers or has not been introduced from the outside (Paredes, 2018). Therefore, using the term *tribu* or *lumads* among my interlocutors has become customary to refer to themselves as "Tribal Council of Elders" or *Tribung Konseho sa mga Kanunuan*.

Customary Power and Sense of Responsibility

The *Tribung Konseho sa mga Kanunuan,* or the Tribal Council of Elders, holds power and customary authority as a deliberative and consensus element to indigenous cultural life. Traditional authority and power are instrumental in maintaining peace and harmony. Power in the Manobo language is translated as *gahum.* To them, *gahum* means *kakayahan,* referring to one's capacity, influence, authority, and responsibility. Under customary laws, Indigenous political leaders have also been delegated the responsibility to push for the agenda of indigenous progress and cultural development. There are gendered roles and social expectations on who wields power and authority within the council. The Tribal Council engages in a patriarchal system that puts men as Tribal chieftains or what they call *Pinong Datu*. The *Pinong Datu,* or Tribal Chieftain, holds eminent *gahum* or power to govern his indigenous constituents and community members. The Tribal Council is relegated to the power of selecting a Datu to act as the Tribal Chieftain of the community. Specific qualifications or essential requisites should be met to become a Datu (Lao, 1999).

The *Pinong Datu* and *Baes* also have the power to manage conflicts and create resolutions to safeguard the community's peace and order. Although the dominant studies on conflict and resolution primarily investigate professionalized conflict management tools, which are heavily influenced by Western discourses and frameworks, Indigenous methods of conflict resolution have been one of the most highlighted subjects studied by sociologists and anthropologists (Aall and Chester, 2017; Adebayo et al., 2014; Avruch, 2015; Millar, 2014). Recently, Lundy et al. (2022) critically question the effectiveness and applicability of these professionalized frameworks, particularly in the local and indigenous contexts. Whilst some scholars acknowledge that the idea of conflict management is rooted in how the bureaucratic systems work around the world, like Lundy et al. (2022), my contention in this chapter is to elaborate on how we can draw insightful ways of managing conflict and creating resolutions through the lived experiences of one the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns.

Whilst customary authority and power come from the *Pinong Datu*, it must be emphasised that the Manobo-Pulanguiyen community also acknowledge the role of the Baes in the political structure and their participation in decision-making. The *Baes,* or female leaders, also represent their respective barangay and clans. Baes are tasked to execute specific duties and responsibilities attuned to the customary ways, particularly spiritual activities, and divination. In some cases, appointed Baes can be a member of the Tribal Council of Elders. Just like choosing a Datu, the Baes are also selected based on their innate gifts and capacities to lead and serve their community. The Tribal Datu and Baes serve as community leaders who exercise customary power to protect and promote their cultural heritage.

As modernity and various social influences loom in their community, the Tribal Council of Elders and the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns devised mechanisms to safeguard their cultural practices, traditions, customs, beliefs, etc. Based on observations, Indigenous leaders in the Tribal Council of Elders mainly resist modernity. As change

is inevitable, they devise mechanisms to preserve some traditional practices and rituals. This selective processing mechanism allows them to filter necessary changes (Coronel, 2003). These social processes involve the participation of community leaders and members. During my fieldwork, I found that the Tribal Council crafted a written resolution stipulating the power and duties of every council member. The resolution refers to the Manobo-Pulanguiyén's *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay* (Indigenous Political Structure). Under Section 6 of Article 5 in the proposed resolution, *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay* is defined as:

> *Ang Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay (IPS) sa tribung Manobo Pulangion mao ang hulagway sa panggobyerno sa lumad nga nagabarug nga gawasnon sa bisan unsang matang sa impluwensya sa langyaw, indibidwal man o grupo ug nagadala, nagaduso ug nagapanalipid sa katungod sa mga Lumad dinhi sa Lungsod sa Quezon.*
>
> (The Indigenous Political Structure of the Manobo-Pulanguiyen reflects the indigenous governance established as an independent body which various social actors, particularly outsiders, have not influenced, may it be from an individual or collective group who may potentially impede Indigenous People's rights in the Municipality of Quezon).

The definition above articulates the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns' power and capacity to define and redefine indigenous political structures attuned to their customary laws. Likewise, the resolution is a shield or protection from outsiders who may harm their customs, traditions, and indigeneity. Crafting resolutions such as Manobo-Pulanguiyén's *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay* resonates with Scott's (1990) *infrapolitics* or micropolitics. *Infrapolitics* is defined as the "cultural and structural substratum of those more visible forms of action" (see also D'etudes, 2012). Thus, the *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay* is an illustration of these cultural and structural substrata, which can be found in the micro-level forms of power.

Moreover, crafting resolutions reflects political expressions and resistance to the colonialist/modernist/nationalist framework of exercising power (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). However, it must be noted that according to the IPMRs, the resolution does not mean that the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns no longer comply with or subject themselves to national or State policies. Instead, the overall objective of the proposed resolution is to strengthen their customary laws, political structure, indigenous governance, and autonomy. Through the *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay,* the Tribal Council of Elders, leaders and representatives will become instrumental actors in deliberately exercising power and authority in governing its constituents based on their customary ways or traditional practices.

Decision-making is articulated consensually by the Tribal Council of Elders, representatives, and community members. But in most cases, the Tribal Council has

the final say about matters affecting their ancestral lands, cultural practices, heritage, and traditions. There are varied examples that I can draw from my empirical data. However, the dominant affairs relating to decision-making resonate with issues on ancestral land and disputes, economic and agricultural programs, and cultural revitalization. For example, as presented earlier, the Tribal Council can resolve land disputes through customary ways called *sala* and *husay*. These traditional practices are forms of managing conflicts and disagreements over land disputes. Some ways of articulating decision-making point to what counts for economic activities and livelihood projects perceived as beneficial to the community. In my previous ethnographic and ongoing PhD engagements, I observed that the Manobo-Pulanguiyen focussed on farming or agricultural programs supported by the local government units and the Department of Agriculture. The decision-making concerns what agricultural techniques must be incorporated to augment their yields.

Finally, the Tribal Council prioritises safeguarding their cultural performances and traditional arts. For example, modifications to their cultural performances are carefully and deliberately evaluated on how performances should be staged in the public and private domains (Celeste, 2017). One certain criterion delves into cultural performances shown on various platforms must still resonate with the Manobo-Pulanguiyén's everyday life (see more in Chapter 7). Overall, matters relating to the mobilization of indigeneity and organizing socio-cultural events are always subject to deliberative assessment. In the following sections, I turn to how my interlocutors utilized some of the local and national affordances that supported their claims and assertions of indigeneity. Moreover, I elaborate on the grassroots experiences of making and mobilizing indigeneity through the active participation of community members, non-government organizations (NGOs) and civil societies. I do this by prioritising the Manobo-Pulanguiyén's lived experiences, ways of knowing and everyday presentation of grassroots indigeneity.

Conflict Management, Creating Resolutions

Drawing on some aspects of Manobo customary power, I also aim to discuss how conflict and resolution shape the Manobo indigeneity in everyday life. I pay particular attention to their traditional ways called *sala* and *husay*. These forms of conflict resolution are also articulations of indigenous power, everyday politics, and cultural agency. For Manobo-Pulanguiyen, *sala* and *husay* are customary practices encompassing the Indigenous ways of cultural protection, conflict resolution and reconciliation. Overall, it must be stressed that the primary function of *sala* and *husay* is to ensure peace, order, and harmony in the Manobo community. But what is the difference between *sala* and *husay*? *Sala* is a form of sanction and punishment through customary trial facilitated by the Tribal Council of Elders. This practice also reinforces a form of the mechanism: a) behaviour control and modification, b) maintaining peace and order, and c) shielding or protecting the Manobos from various forms of discrimination and prejudices. S*ala* is a means to call the attention of the aggressors and the aggrieved for negotiations. If the aggressor is found to be responsible, he/she must pay or indemnify the moral damages that they caused to the aggrieved party. This can be in the form of money or animals like chickens, pigs, cows, etc. In the past,

the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns used beads as indemnification, but this depends on the negotiation process. This is because the aggrieved can always demand payments from the aggressor. The amount is also dependent on the class or position of the aggrieved. If the aggrieved happens to be the Tribal Chieftain or holds a vital role in the society, whether Manobo or non-Manobo, it is expected that payments must be commensurate with their status or position. The higher the position the aggrieved holds, the higher the amount must be paid.

Nowadays, the *sala* has undergone modifications or changes as to how this was practised earlier. According to one of the *Baes*, sala was a grave form of indigenous sanction viewed to be rigid and brutal. Historically, *sala was* a form of punishment by death. Bae Maria, one of the members of Tres Marias, stressed that they must refrain from engaging in *sala* because of its vehement past. She recalled her experience at a young age when she witnessed how the aggressor was punished to death. Although the *sala* has been modified and no longer engaged in brutal punishment, she still reminds the Tribal Council to be more humane in resolving conflicts. Whilst *sala* is instrumental in gauging sanctions or punishment, it must be emphasised that facilitating the *sala* is influenced by the level and severity of damages done. Therefore, this would mean that not all conflicts are subjected to the *sala.* Others resorted to amicable settlements called "husay".

Husay is another customary method of "reconciliation". This practice is instrumental in reconciling each other's differences. *Husay,* translated in English, means "to reconcile". Only a *Pinong Datu* (Tribal Head Chieftain) or *Balughusay* (The Mediator) and *Sulay Bae* (Female Head) can facilitate a *husay.* This is also done to negotiate conflict without resorting to *sala, a* severe punishment. Thus, *husay* is a reconciliation method so two aggrieved parties will solve their indifferences without resorting to *sala*. This is because the *sala* obliges the aggressor to pay vast amounts of money and tokens for cultural indemnification. Through *husay,* both parties can negotiate without requiring the aggressor to pay. Instead, the aggressor will only be required to engage in the *pamalas* ritual as a symbolic form of bridging a gap because of misunderstanding. To engage in pamalas, one would offer white chicken to be butchered and Manobo prayers are uttered to make amends and connections to the spiritual worlds, guiding them in the reconciliation process. But both *sala* and *husay* are done through performing a *pamuhat* ritual by the Ritualist. For almost eight months of fieldwork, I have witnessed four (4) *husay* negotiations—Table 5.1 shows mediated husay by the Tribal Council of Elders and *Balaghusay.* Most cases of *husay* revolved around land disputes or conflicts between clan members or community members and outsiders and non-Manobo groups in the area. *Husay* is also instrumental in resolving misunderstandings or personal conflicts through gossip and spreading rumours. To conduct husay, a *pamuhat* or *pamalas* ritual is facilitated. After the ritual, amicable settlements or negotiations will be done. Unlike the *sala, husay* agreements are done in a friendly manner by which the aggressor will only be

required to pay a small amount to indemnify the damages. The reconciliation usually takes a day or two, depending on the issue or concern.

Table 5.1. Ethnographic Observation on Cases of Mediated *Husay*

Individuals involved	Key Persons In-charged	Place of Husay	Date	Reason for Husay	Resolution
A mother and sister-in-law	Tribal Datu of TINDOGA, Community's secretary	Datu's House in TINDOGA	September 15, 2021	Personal issues and gossip	Cultural indemnification through the pamalas ritual and offering of chicken
Tribal Datu, claimants, and a public school	Pinong Datu, Municipal IPMR, Balughusay	Office of the Municipal IPMR	October 12, 2021	Land disputes	Cultural and monetary indemnification; pamalas ritual and *Sala*
Datu, Bae and claimants of Barangay Merangeran	Pinong Datu, Municipal IPMR, Balughusay	Office of the Municipal IPMR	November 9, 2021	Land disputes	Cultural and monetary indemnification; payment in the form of 2 carabaos and pamalas ritual
Indigenous claimants against non-indigenous claimants	Pinong Datu, Municipal IPMR, Balughusay	Office of the Municipal IPMR	December 10, 2021	Land disputes	At a time, as I was observing, the two parties were still negotiating.

Sala and *husay* are viewed as significant traditional practices, cultural continuity, and mediation links. These help the community maintain harmony, solidarity, and peace among clan members and other ethnolinguistic groups. Moreover, these customary practices of managing conflict and creating resolution also shape how Manobo indigeneity is made and remade through various social actors such as the Tribal Council of Elders, community leaders and representatives. In the following sections, I turn to how my interlocutors utilized some of the local and national affordances that supported their claims and assertions of indigeneity. Moreover, I elaborate on the grassroots experiences of making and mobilizing indigeneity through the active participation of community members, non-government organizations (NGOs) and

civil societies. I do this by prioritising the Manobo-Pulanguiyén's lived experiences, ways of knowing and everyday presentation of grassroots indigeneity.

The Grassroots Mobilization: Opportunities and Challenges

In literature and practice, there are many ways to define grassroots indigeneity mobilisation. Shimizu (2019) equates grassroots mobilization through community participation and various support from non-government organizations and civil society movements. Tindaan (2020) pushes for "reconstructing indigeneity" derived from the local or indigenous epistemologies, ontologies and experiences. The integration of Indigenous peoples' ways of mobilizing indigeneity resonates with the decolonial approaches to understanding Indigenous People's worldviews. Like Tuhiwai-Smith (2021), I argue that acknowledging, recognizing and integrating Indigenous peoples' knowledge and lived experiences is a decolonial way of knowing that can provide a more in-depth understanding of the Indigenous Peoples' social realities or Lifeworlds. For the past ten years, the making of indigeneity in the community has been influenced by the local agency, non-government organizations, and various grassroots movements. There are three forms of grassroots mobilization of indigeneity in this ethnographic material: 1) social involvement as grassroots indigeneity from both personal and collective acts, 2) showcasing cultural performances, and 3) radicalizing indigeneity through engaging in creative activism and resistance movements.

Social Involvement as Grassroots Indigeneity

There are two dominant forms or acts of mobilization revolving around social involvement as grassroots undertakings of indigeneity: personal and collective. In this setting, the Manobo community's grassroots undertaking also reflects the various forms of articulations and engagements in local politics and cultural affairs. To make sense of these acts, personal and collective, I provide some ethnographic vignettes that may reflect the institutionalized forms of state cooperation, citizenship, community participation, and the grassroots making of indigeneity. From the macro-level perspective, these ethnographic scenarios also project an interactional relationship between a social institution and political actors: The State and the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns.

Personal acts, here, refer to one's responsibility to tend to the needs of community members. Collective acts refer to the community's participation in promoting and mobilizing indigeneity. Cultural heritage and identity celebrations are not the only opportunities or mechanisms to mobilize indigeneity (Yamashita, 2007; Shimizu, 2019). One of these is translated into forming groups or associations in the community. The Manobo-Pulanguiyen Teredseyawan Group is an example of this group actively participating in local tourism and indigenous festivals and showcasing their cultural performances in various places (Celeste, 2016; Celeste, 2017). The group is composed of the Manobo choreographers and young performers. I happened to engage this group when I was doing an ethnography of *Binanog* dance between 2014 and 2015 for my master's thesis. In 2021, whilst doing a PhD ethnographic work, I met a few of the

members whom I had interviewed before again. Yet it has come to my attention that some of them have already moved to cities in search of job opportunities. Some new members, mostly young people aged 12-22, have been added to the group. When I asked them about their participation, most stressed that through this group, they could perform, showcase their talents, and promote Manobo culture and identity. Thus, cultural performances are opportunities for creativity, continuity, and reflexivity.

Showcasing of Cultural Performances

Another form of mobilizing indigeneity is through the different modes of presenting the Manobo cultural performances. Performing indigeneity as a way of mobilizing indigeneity is a global phenomenon (Ndlovu, 2019). Many Indigenous Peoples around the world assert indigeneity through their cultural performances, such as rituals, dances, songs, poetry, paintings, and other forms of art. These expressions, such as performing indigeneity, are essential to survival and continuity (Moriyami, 2008). Other cases show that indigeneity is also linked to the embodied practice of cultural heritage, identity, and performance (Graham and Penny, 2014; Sisson, 2005). In this case, indigenous festivals and other cultural affairs institutionalised by the local government units and the Manobo-Pulanguiyen Tribal Council are seen as opportunities for mobilizing indigeneity. As a means of support, budget allocations are embedded in the barangay and municipal levels, which go into the expenses of indigenous festivals and tourism. The purpose is to promote indigenous cultures, revitalise traditions and empower Indigenous Cultural Communities (Shimizu, 2019; Celeste, 2017; Suminguit and Celeste, 2015). For example, I use the case of the *Sunggod teh Kamanga* Festival. This indigenous festival is a prime example of this locally funded activity that allows the Manobo-Pulanguiyen to showcase their cultural performances to express their indigeneity.

Moreover, the festival provides more opportunities to recalibrate and reconfigure their cultural performances. Creativity and innovations such as modifications and stylistic formations make their cultural performances more vibrant and entertaining for the various spectators (Meethan, 2001; Hobsbawm, 2012; Celeste, 2017). Overall, the showcasing of cultural performances in multiple contexts has allowed the Manobo-Pulanguiyen to embrace, embody and revive their cultural heritage and identity amidst the many ecological transformations, social changes and various open moments that are taking place in their community. Eligio (2012) argues that political struggles change Indigenous Peoples' cultures through time and place. Furthermore, as Hobsbawm (2012) contends, reinventing traditions and recalibrating performances also represent modernity and futurity.

Asserting Indigeneity Through Activism and Resistance Movements

Various studies of resistance movements and indigenous activism form part of the radicalization of claim-making, the assertion of Indigenous Peoples' power, self-determination, and cultural recognition (Anaya 2005; Bayart 2005; Dove 2006; Kymlicka 2008; Macklem 2008; Yee and Morin, 2009; Theriault, 2011; Perez, 2017;

Awasis, 2023). As I have discussed elsewhere, activism and resistance movements are crucial yet necessary coalitions made by the Manobo-Pulanguiyen with environmentalists, Indigenous activists, and human rights advocates. For many years, some of my interlocutors have stressed that the different ways of articulating activism movements in the fight for cultural recognition and self-determination have been through creative expressions such as dance, music, poetry, protests, rallies, and innovative yet evocative performances. Creative expressions of activism are potent modes of conveying the messages for Indigenous People's fight and plight for justice and equality (Ginsburg, 1991). The expressions are also supported by various social actors such as filmmakers and journalists who have produced documentaries and news coverage to help raise awareness of Indigenous Peoples' struggles and social problems. Moreover, indigenous activism portrayed in various media platforms such as social media, news, films, and documentaries pushes forward current issues regarding self-determination, data sovereignty, and cultural representation (Ginsburg 1991; Carlson and Dreher 2021).

Recently, the use of diverse social media platforms among the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns such as Facebook and TikTok has been observed to amplify indigenous political voices for self-determination and cultural recognition (Presto and Curato, 2018; Calabias, 2022; Celeste, 2024). For example, in a local station, you can hear Datu E, one of my interlocutors, discussing his political yet radical views advocating Indigenous rights in the fight for ancestral domains. He reckons the battle for traditional territories and indigenous rights is far from over. He believes that by using the media platform, the state agencies pay attention to the fight for Lumad's quest for freedom, justice, and equality. Moreover, a few Indigenous activists I have talked with lamented that coalitions with Leftist/radical parties, religious sectors, and other non-government organizations are necessary for the revolutionary mobilization of Indigenous groups. However, coalescing with radical movements has only provided ruptures or risks to Indigenous Peoples' lives and security. In the news coverage, many Indigenous activists or Lumad fighters have been red-tagged. There have been reports that they have been killed for the reason of opposing development aggression and land grabbing of ancestral lands (Padilla et al., 2013). Until today, the Manobo-Pulanguiyen continue to fight, and the quest for land rights, cultural recognition and self-determination is far from over.

Conclusion

As presented in this chapter, the making of indigeneity is both a global and local yet multi-layered phenomenon. The literature provides that the various articulations, configurations, mechanisms and lived experiences shape how indigeneity is produced and reproduced in the everyday life of Indigenous Peoples such as the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns. Paying attention to the diversity of representations of indigeneity contributes to this multilayered phenomenon. Simply put, the making of indigeneity emanates a "spectrum of interpretations and representations". Conversely, the representation of indigeneity for many years has been subjugated to political reasons, economic tourism, commoditization, and cultural misappropriation. For example,

politicians, businesspeople, and capitalists use their power to institutionalize programs that aim to seek patronage among indigenous peoples. This bears then a question of who represents indigeneity. Is it the indigenous people themselves, the State, or the capitalists? These questions also remind me of Paredes' (2018) contention that ethnic identity is a matter of self-presentation. But who's voices in the representation matters here? At the grassroots level, indigeneity is produced and reproduced or reconstructed as a response to the political, socio-ecological, cultural, and indigenous transformations caused by colonialism, capitalism and postcolonialism (Celeste, 2023; Telles, 2023; Shimizu, 2019).

We can draw significant insights from the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns' lived experience of the making of indigeneity. This can be presented twofold: First, the Indigenous-State relationship offers opportunities and contradictions. Lund (2017) argues that indigeneity as a political authority is (re)made through its successful exercise of state power. Many decolonial scholars argue that colonial indigeneity juxtaposed with nationalist indigeneity undermines Indigenous Peoples' power and authority (Morton, 2017). However, this ethnographic material suggests that a dual arrangement of indigeneity from the State and Tribal Council is possible. Although my interlocutors stressed contradictions in how they present their indigeneity, this has also provided them opportunities to reconfigure what works in their community. For example, the Manobo-Pulanguiyen incorporated some of these frameworks in their Indigenous political systems or *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay*. Whilst there are amendments to their *Lumadnong Politikanhung Gambalay*, they emphasised that they still sustain cultural integrity and core elements of their political structure. The integration and dual arrangement of frameworks are subjected to what Coronel (2003) calls *selective processing* by the Tribal Council of Elders and community representatives. Thus, *selective processing* as a cultural agency allows the Manobo-Pulanguiyen as social actors to act over social situations from the micro and macro factors affecting their indigeneity.

Second, decolonial ways of understanding Indigenous power and cultural agency begin by acknowledging the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples. I draw on the contentions of many decolonial and indigenous scholars by pushing for the centralization and empowerment of the epistemological ways of Indigenous people's representation. These cultural acts also mean that centralizing indigenous power means acknowledging and respecting indigenous ways of knowing, exercising power, influencing authority, and observing autonomy and governance. For example, my ethnographic thesis provides that consensus and deliberative decision-making by the Tribal Council play significant roles in actualizing control, peace and order. Moreover, religious or spiritual activities in the form of rituals guide the decision-making and meaningful undertakings of the Manobo people. As the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns can use various platforms in the everyday making and presentation of indigeneity, several challenges or cultural paradoxes may affect the making of indigeneity.

Whilst scholars argue that indigeneity is influenced by Western ideologies and the State or nationalist framework, the case of the Manobo-Pulanguiyen provides a narrative of making sense of the traditional, local, and national provisions in how they assert and present their indigeneity. Like Anaya (2009), I contend that the duality of two frameworks, such as the nationalist and indigenous representations, can work together provided each framework is recognized, respected, and integrated. As this case shows, the Manobo-Pulanguiyéns use the constitutional provisions to protect Indigenous Peoples as well as fight for land rights, cultural recognition, and self-determination. Consequently, whilst socio-political challenges and state contradictions influence the ways of the Manobo-Pulanguiyén's making and mobilization of indigeneity, opportunities may arise from these situations. As in the context of my ethnographic research, reflective insights and opportunities can be derived from the following: a) safeguarding Indigenous people's rights and customary laws, b) supporting Indigenous peoples' cultural progress and development through their terms and capacities, c) practising cultural inclusivity and empowering cultural performances, d) decolonizing approaches in conflict management or resolutions and e) the making of indigeneity can transcend the boundaries of time, places and space.

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