

## Yapayao-Isneg Tribe: Ethnozoological Beliefs, Traditions and Practices in the Current Century

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**Abstract**—The belief and practices indigenous people demonstrate on the use of animals place the reverence they communicate to these God-given creatures. Animals for these people marks omens, serve as guides, commune them with their deities, sanctify their rituals, and heal them of their illnesses. The Yapayao-Isneg Tribe from Adams, Ilocos Norte is but one of the many indigenous people living in that part of the Philippines who, just like any other tribes, possesses unique knowledge about animals that symbolizes their culture. Their communion with animals as well as their perception on the significance of these animals in their daily lives speaks volumes that would differentiate them from the rest of the other tribes. From the information gathered during the course of the study, it was stipulated by the interviewees that their belief and customs, their tradition and culture with regards to the importance of animals varies as to the occasion which necessitates the participation of the animals – from hunting to farming, during sickness and healing, in omens and even in death rites.

**Keywords** – Yapayao-Isneg, Adams, ethnozoology, beliefs, tradition, practices, indigenous people

### INTRODUCTION

Ancestors of the old influenced us in our beliefs and traditions. More so, the origin of all indigenous knowledge that we have known can be traced back from their history — how they lived, socialized, and how they survived their generation which was competitive in nature.

Ethnozoology studies the interaction and interrelationships between human cultures and the animals in their environment in the past and present times. It includes the cultural knowledge that could be derived from their experiences. Furthermore, it also encompasses the classification, naming, usage, and importance of wild and domestic zoological forms (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnozoology>).

Ideas concerned with ethnozoology provide scientific explanations that reconnect the indigent traditional and cultural systems of knowledge to our current belief system. The way how the indigenous people used their existing knowledge of the animals on their daily lives forms a foundation of their beliefs, traditions

and practices. Most significantly is that it also accounts on how they apply and relate this acquired knowledge to the beliefs that govern their life and to that of the human society as a whole.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study primarily aims to examine the different ethnozoological beliefs, traditions and practices of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe in Adams, Ilocos Norte. Specifically, this study aims to determine the common animals used in the tribe's daily living, cite the beliefs related to the animals that have long been practiced in their tribe, and recognize other significant usage of animals in their tribal culture.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Qualitative research method was utilized to explore and uncover the relevant information about the ethnozoological beliefs, traditions and practices of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe to attain the objectives of this study. Semi-structured individual interview was conducted among the

natives of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe to have a better understanding and deeper insights about their beliefs and traditions.

The respondents of this study were the residents of Adams which includes a number of Yapayao-Isneg farmers and housewives; the former municipal agriculture officer Mr. Eliseo F. Ravelo and his wife who also happens to be the tribal secretary as well as an elementary teacher, Mrs. Albertina T. Ravelo; the Yapayao-Isneg tribal chieftain, Mr. Bernardo P. Tawali, and the tribal doctor or faith healer also known by the native language as the “*Durarakit*”.

The interview process which had taken place was recorded through the use of paper and pen as well as video and audio recordings which were later translated into writings. Results of the interview were then divided into specific categories such as the uses of animals in the tribe, their beliefs relating to the animals, and their traditions and practices involving the said animals.

Related literatures and studies were reviewed to gather supplementary data and information that will substantiate the result of this study.

## RELATED LITERATURE

### The Tribe

Also known as Apayao or Iapayao, the Yapayao-Isneg tribe is a sub-group from an upland minority population who migrated from the mountain region of Kalinga-Apayao to their present locations in Adams, Ilocos Norte. Adams and Dumalneg are the two municipalities in Ilocos Norte that are predominantly composed of Yapayao-Isneg tribe (Wallace, 2005).



Figure 1. The Yapayao-Isneg in their traditional native clothing. Photo credit: Blauearth - “*Adams: A diversity of cultures*” (April 17, 2009).

From the above figure, Wallace in 2005, presents some of the members of the tribe in their traditional dress of *Baag* or G-string for the men and *quen* or wrap-around skirt for women during a community program.

### Geographical Background of Adams

Adams is one of the four Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICC) in the province of Ilocos Norte. It is surrounded by Pagudpud, Santa Praxedes, Cagayan in the north, Calanasan, Apayao in the east, Dumalneg in the west and Vintar in the south. According to the 2005 population census the area is a 5<sup>th</sup> class municipality that is composed of only one barangay with a population of 1,792 people. Adams' population is a mixture of different tribes like Ilocanos, Yapayaos, Immalods, Kankanaeys, and Bago. There were 18 waterfalls and 10 hanging bridges that can be found in this municipality ([https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Adams\\_Ilocos\\_Norte](https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Adams_Ilocos_Norte)).

Dela Rosa in 2009 described Adams being the “*aroma of wild animals*” due to the abundance of deer and wild pigs in the area. He also mentioned in his internet-published article that the villagers during this time feast on their catch of birds, squirrels, and a variety of wild fruits.

### Tadek-Bagat Festival of Adams

On May 5, 2009 Edwin Antonio featured from his blogsite called Treasures of Ilocandia and the World the Tadek-Bagat Festival. From the Yapayao-Isneg language, “Tadek” and “Bagat” translates to “Tribe” and “Celebration” respectively and that year the municipality of Adams was featured as being the host of the annual gathering of Ilocos Norte Cultural Communities (INCC). The theme used

then was “Panagkakamayet daguiti tribu, pataudenna ti progreso” which means “Unity among tribes will result to progress”.



Figure 2. Exhibition of Animal Butchering  
 Photo credit: Edwin Antonio (<http://www.ilocandia-treasures.com/2009/05/tadek-bagat-festival-of-adams.html>)

There were a series of activity and cultural presentations that showcased the history, rituals and traditions of Dumalneg and Adams. One of the highlights in his blog is the display of butchering of animals for offering during ceremonial dances (Figure 2). From the cited blog, the author emphasized that though shocking, the act itself only strengthens the authenticity of the unique quality of the Yapayao-Isneg culture (Antonio, 2009).

### **Beliefs Chronicled by other Researchers**

With certainty, the identifying factor in a certain indigenous tribe is their belief system and the means at which they practice this. The manner that transpires during an incident related to a particular belief marks their unique qualities as well as binds them as a tribe.

As written by Wallace in 2005, the Yapayao-Isneg is a tribe of people governed by numerous beliefs. The belief in farming alone is already quite overwhelming that he had listed some of his collected information in his article, *The Changing Village Environment in Southeast Asia: Applied anthropology and environmental reclamation in the northern Philippines*. Cited

below is some of the knowledge imparted by the resulting research Wallace had made:

- if a man were to encounter any species of snake, he should leave the area;
- seeing a monitor lizard was a sign that the yields will be poor or that a family member may become ill;
- encountering a kingfisher bird was a sign that disaster may befall the kaingin; and,
- hearing a deer bellow is interpreted as being told to look elsewhere for a kaingin plot.

As given by the same article, since the tribe had settled in Adams and did not migrate much from place to place, farmers had hinted that belief in such omens governed by animals had mellowed down through the years though some of the older members of their tribe still believe in it.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Significant Animals and their Use**

The Yapayao-Isneg tribe, like any other communities, has varied uses for the animals found in their surroundings. Some were used for farming, some as house pets, and some as major food sources, while some are used for barter in exchange for other supplies. Furthermore, another defining aspect of owning animals is for use to perform tribal rituals. The following section cites the common animals utilized by the tribe in their daily quest for existence.

#### *Fowl*

The wild-type chicken, also commonly known as the Labuyo, is commonly used as food but at some instances as the usual part of a tribal ritual. In the old days, this type of avian is hunted from the forest but since their number had dwindled and its presence harder to find, nowadays the Yapayao-Isneg tribe raises the commercialized type of chickens in their backyards.



Figure 3. Chicken found on street sides in Adams.  
Photo credit: Catherine B. Briones (February 16, 2018)

Though ample land is available for raising a brood, people had opted to raise only a small number of chicken, just enough for their family's needs. Also, it was observed that instead of containing the said chickens in coops, they are seen roaming on the streets of the neighborhood scratching on soils and possibly looking for food, then comfortably roosting only in the afternoon (Figure 3).

When asked about the ownership of the fowls during the interview, it was said that the people do not encounter any problem with regards to ownership as well as the habit at which the chickens are left wandering because the people knows which of these fowls belong to whom and nobody ever claim that which is not theirs to begin with so therefore, no conflict arises in the matter of ownership.

#### *Carabao*



Figure 4. Tadek-Bagat festival presentation of the tribe which shows the importance of carabaos in their lives.

Photo credit: Blaeuarth - "*Adams: A diversity of cultures*"

Raised solely for farming purposes, the carabao is utilized in Yapayao-Isneg farm lands specifically for tilling the rice paddies in preparation to rice planting. According to the interviewees, the carabaos during the early years are the basic necessities for farming to take place in Adams (figure 4). Today due to the modernization of technology, some farmers who are capable of buying a machine to help them out in the planting process opted to use farming equipments instead of carabaos.

The carabao is also used by the people either to pull man-made carts as means of transporting produce from the farm to the market or as a vehicle to transport people.

#### *Deer, Pig, and Boar*

Very much like the chickens, the deer and boar or the wild pig is primarily used as food in the community. Same with the chickens, availability of deers and boars had become scarce throughout the years that the difficulty of finding one in the forest had been a very challenging feat to the people. Its limited number had been a burden during hunting – consuming more time and effort just in trying to spot one thus, the community decided to raise

the farm pigs that were observed from some of the families in Adams. It was stated by the interviewees that when a pig is killed for consumption, usually the whole neighborhood feasts with the owner of the animal. This act of sharing the blessing is very evident from the zero crime committed in the area.

Conduct of tribal rituals constitutes pigs or, boars only in two events. One is wherein there is the presence of a milady experienced by the affected person which had elevated to a serious condition and sacrificing chickens will not be sufficient anymore to ease the illness. Blood of a pig or a boar will then be used as sacrifice (see healing/sickness). And two, when there had been death by any one of the members of the tribe and the people have to conduct a ritual for the safe passage of the souls of their departed.

### *Dog*

According to the former municipal agriculture officer, an average of five (5) dogs can be seen on every house in Adams and like any other communities, dogs had long since been adopted in the tribe as pets or as guards against interlopers. Though the Yapayao-Isneg tribe is a peaceful group of people with zero crimes in their community and any possible problem with interlopers really is not existent, still they keep dogs inside their yards for company. Moreover, some of the owners bring along their dogs with them to accompany them during farming or hunting to alarm and safeguard them from other wild animals. Since the dogs possess keen senses they are also proven very useful in finding games from the forest.

As sacrificial tribute, this animal is also killed for its blood to heal the sick as well as for the repose of a dead one's soul.

### *Bird*

Aside from the fowl previously mentioned, another bird that has a direct impact on how the people from the tribe proceed with their day-to-day work is the *labag*. This bird as cited by Mr. Eliseo F. Ravelo, is known to his people as the "omen bird". From the term itself, it is widely believed that this bird could forecast whether a certain endeavor will be productive or unsuccessful based on the pattern of its flight (see succeeding section on animal beliefs for additional information).

### *Others: Cat, goat, fish, crab, shrimp*

There are other animals that have had a direct impact on the lives of the people in the tribe, some terrestrial, some aquatic. They are not used for any rituals associated in healing or for calming the spirits of the dead but are used to favor some other instances deemed as necessity by the tribal people. The cat as an example is kept inside houses not only as companions but also as pest eradicators that curbs mice population in the house. This for them is the most natural way of limiting the population of pests that could destroy their personal

belongings and, or contaminate their food supply.

The goat, fish, crab, and shrimp on the other hand are directly farmed or hunted as one of the food source that the people could use when all other food sources is not sufficient. Some of the goats in Adams are found enclosed in yards while some, just like the chickens, are left to roam the streets. During the course of the study, the goats where observed to forage on the grass which grows on vacant lots and street sides while some of them are found resting underneath trees or under shaded areas.



Figure 5. The fisher-folks of Adams as presented during the Tadek-Bagat festival. Photo credit: Blauearth - "Adams: A diversity of cultures" (April 17, 2009).

As cited, the locality hosts a number of water falls that merge in river basins. Here, majority of the animals are found and are caught only in quantities that would suffice the needs of the people, never in excess. Fresh water fishes, crabs, as well as shrimps though not farmed however, are mainly caught or trapped along the river that directly flows in the land of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe. Catching methods practiced by the people require only their bare hands, simple traps, hooks, or nets as shown by the fisher-folks in figure 5.



### Animal Tribal Beliefs and Practices

The same with other indigenous tribe in the Ilocos Region, the Yapayao-Isneg tribe have various animal-related beliefs and practices which could be marked as culturally unique from the rest of the other tribes. Animals in the life of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe are significant as, at times, it relates to superstitious convictions or the belief in unnatural beings. In addition, based on the information gathered, their beliefs and practiced system can be categorized as to hunting, farming, health or healing, and death. In each one of these, sacrificial animals are offered to appease the gods and, or goddesses of the old, as well as repose the spirit of the dead for the attainment of everlasting peace.

#### Hunting

When the men of the tribe are hunting for wild boars, edible frogs, or deer, they bring along with them shells that serves as lucky charms for them to bring home bountiful hunt. Though before this is done, or before organizing a hunting trip to the forest, the Yapayao hunters observe the movement and flight behavior of the *labag*. If an omen bird is observed to take flight from the right going to the left of the observant, the action of the bird is interpreted to be bad luck or "*bwisi*". If that was the case, whatever endeavor is tasked to be done that particular day is cancelled and moved to another day until the bird otherwise acted according for a more favorable condition. If it flies from the left going to the right side of the observant, then the act of the bird signifies good luck, good fortune, or hope. This displays that the hunter would be lucky and safe during hunting and that the plans for the day will end up productive.

Likewise, the tribal people believed that if someone intended to purchase merchandises which necessitates them going to other localities, presence of these omen birds along the "*Pantian*" (road or path), the person is advised not continue either on that particular day or to the intended place because appearance of the said bird signifies that the presumed endeavor will be unproductive and the endeavor itself will be met with bad luck. In addition, as stated by

Mr. Eliseo F. Ravelo, "*Kapag along the way, halimbawa ang sadya mo ay bumili ng mga pangangailangan, kapag may ibon [pertaining to a labag] na dumaaan ibig sabihin walang-wala ang pupuntahan kaya hindi na tutuloy*".

#### Farming

The Yapayao-Isneg tribe takes their responsibility to the environment in a very serious manner. They are also very protective of their surroundings most especially to that of their farmlands. They believe that not only is the land as source of food for them, but rather it is part of their culture and heritage.

The practice of *kaingin* or slash-and-burn is done annually in order to retain the integrity of their farm soil. The people believe that in order for their farming to be productive and their harvest to become bountiful they should allocate ample time for the land to recover from the previous planting so that the soil will be improved on the next season. Moreover, since the people are highly dependent of taking notice of omens which denotes luck or otherwise, they always try to follow the belief associated with the use of the land as well as the means by which it could be used. Offerings of animals are done before *kaingin*, planting, and harvesting to guarantee that their farming practice is blessed and that the action itself will bring the people good fortune and plenty of yields to reap.

Chickens are the usual sacrificial animal offered but in occasions that a chicken is not available, they also use dogs as substitute. In the ritual that they perform with the elders of the tribe, they obtain the blood of the animal and add herbs to it while praying for good fortune to befall on them during the planting season.

During the interview, one of the elderly participants mentioned that their tribe ancestors used to practice "*tonek*" which a pagan practice done in farming. In this practice, the people solemnly pray to a god-creator named "*Marsua*" to bless the tribe with an abundant harvest. Aside from praying, they are also offer chicken to this god before planting. After a plentiful

harvesting, they sacrifice and offer wild boars to show their appreciation to the gods. Their neighbors who have had the most abundant harvest are assigned by the tribe to initiate the commencement of the said ritual.

#### *Health and Healing*

Illness is most often referred to as a condition wherein there is the presence of an imbalance between the spirit, body, and mind. Healing on the other hand, refers to any ritual, ceremony, or other traditional method that encourages the spiritual, mental, and bodily health of a sick individual (Long, 2012).

Illness as most tribes regards is a negative phenomenon that impacts the health status of the member(s) of the community and is equated to one's sufferings. According to Garro (2000), causes of illnesses in tribes may be considered to be of natural causes and supernatural causes. As per definition given, an illness is natural when modern medicine as we know it today could be used to explain and find reason why the person is afflicted with certain sickness. Example of this is stress related, bodily infection, impairment due to rigorous work, and accidents. The second kind however, deals more in the super natural sense that it is presumed to be outside the realm of science and do not readily applies the law of the norm. Example of this is "*mystical causation (fate, ominous sensation, contagion, mystical retribution), magical causation (sorcery, witchcraft), and animistic causation (soul loss, spirit aggression)*".

In the Yapayao-Isneg tribe, not much had been revealed with regards to the complexity of the belief as well as the corresponding ritual associated with illnesses experienced by the people though in general, the tribal healer had stipulated that nowadays, when a mild illness strike an individual they often go to a public doctor who is medically licensed to treat their cases. As the situation may be, they follow the usual rule of buying medicines from the pharmacy as prescribed by the doctor and taking it as indicated. An example of this is the condition of the tribal leader, Mr. Bernardo P.

Tawali, wherein he seeks to consult a physician regarding his illness.

Though the former statement may be true, on some occasions the Yapayao-Isneg tribe most especially those of the elderlies, believed that hanging the head of a dog in front of their house, usually on top of the door step, will prevent them from getting sick. Similarly, they drink the blood of a pig or wild boar to avoid various illnesses. In rare instances however, according to one of the housewife informants, when a person has illness, the blood of a dog was given to the infected person to heal him/her. This might also be one of the reasons why the people prefer to own more dogs in their home.

Furthermore, in an account given by Mr. Ravelo and his wife, it was mentioned that there still exists some elderly people who believes in sacrificing animals to heal the sick and that the usage of animals to heal any illnesses suffered by a member of their tribe depends on the gravity of the condition they were in. When the illness is considered mild or "*tinakcab*" (simple fever) by their standards, the blood of the chicken added with different kinds of herbs to create a potion may be used to treat the ailing person. Also, a blood offering from the chicken may be used to appease the angry deities which may have aggravated the health of the individual. But as the illness progress, so does the offerings. If the offering of chicken blood does not suffice, then they use the blood of the dog. When the illness reach a certain peak or "*sinang-at*" (serious illness) wherein chicken nor dog blood is not enough to make amends to the angry spirits, then the family sacrifices the life and the blood of a pig hoping that everything will end up in the miraculous recovery of the afflicted person.

#### *Death*

Another ethnozoological belief of the Yapayao-Isneg tribe is when an owl makes a sound other than hooting, it means that in the succeeding hours someone is bound to die. Another belief with the same nature is that of the howling dog. This belief is similar to the Tagalog's belief on a howling dog. It is believed

that when a dog howls in an eerie and hair-raising manner then the house wherein the dog focuses its attention all the while it is howling is inhabited by the person deemed to eventually die, may it be in a few hours or in a matter of days.

Jasmin, one of the informants from the Yapayao-Isneg tribe, said that when one of the member of their community died, on the ninth day of his/her death, a couple of chickens must be offered as sacrifice to prevent succeeding deaths among the family members. Immediately after the burial they should dance the *Kanyaw*. In addition, the family is also obligated to kill a dog in order to obtain its head to be hanged at the door to prevent the “*engkanto*” from entering the house. This is related to the belief of hanging dog heads in cases where illnesses that may eventually lead to a family member’s death is concerned.

### *Supernatural Beings*

According to Mr. Ravelo and his wife, the Yapayao-Isneg tribe is not a crowd of enthusiasts of the supernatural entities such as the “*multo* or *kaluluwang ligaw*”, “*aswang*”, “*manananggal*”, “*tiyanak*”, and any other gory beings easily believed by other tribes. Rather they believe more on deities or, gods and goddesses, nymphs, and fairies. With this, whenever they see fireflies at night it is readily assumed that the place where these insects gather is home to a supernatural being, more so a fairy or a nymph, and that the area is not to be disturbed. If the fireflies happened to be circling a good quality tree, then whatever happens, that tree is never to be touched nor destroyed, nor cut down or else demise will surely fall upon the people behind the disrespect bestowed on the tree.

### **Traditions and Practices Involving Animals**

Various activities that identify the uniqueness of the qualities of the tribe had been brought to attention through this research endeavor. Some still being actively performed

while some had been replaced by newer versions. The succeeding section pertains to those traditions involving animals that some way or the other is still known and familiar to the people but somehow had not been thoroughly practiced anymore.

### *Storage Areas*

In the tribe’s practice of planting and harvesting, direct use of animals as offerings are involved in order for the deities to bless them with good fortune during the planting and harvesting season. Once all activity is done and the produce had been harvested, a storage granary called “*alang*” would be used to stock the yield of the farm.

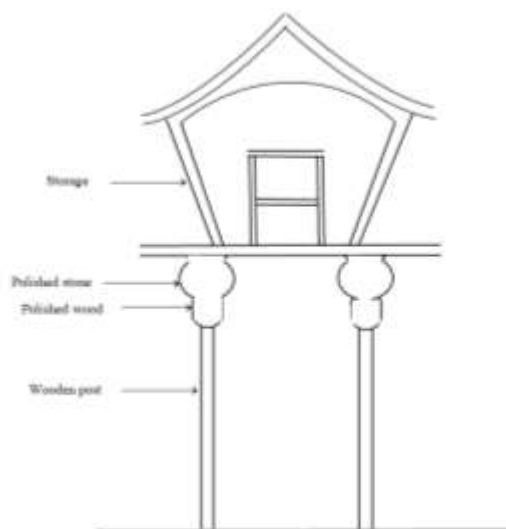


Figure 6. Computer-generated interpretation of the illustration of the “*alang*” used by the Yapayao-Isneg tribe.

One to two kilometers away from the farming land, the harvested yields gathered by the tribe are stored in an *alang* or granaries such as the one illustrated above (figure 6). This design is really intended to prevent pests in looting as well as damaging the stocked harvest. The design of the storage itself is unique in that this type of granary is found only at the Yapayao-Isneg tribe. The architectural design developed by their ancestors is created in such a



way that pest such as rats and other vermins that could easily be found rummaging near the ground would be dissuaded from pillaging the stored harvest.

The storage area basically is a large house where all the harvested crops and other yields could be stocked for safekeeping. It is built above ground almost twice as high as the average Yapayao-Isneg male. The wooden posts that hold the upper portion is made with long sturdy quality wood that could resist being wet or being easily infested by termites and the likes. In order to reach the granary itself a long ladder is placed to the side of one of the beam that serves as the floor of the area. Also, the ladder itself would only be used in the case the people has a need to stock food or obtain provisions for the tribe. If not in need, then the ladder would be placed somewhere else.

In each of the upper part of a post is polished wood wherein on top of it resides a big polished circular boulder or stone. The use of the stone is intentional so that if ever rats managed to climb up the poles of the storage house, it would met with difficulty in reaching the granary due to the presence of the polished stone that is very smooth and would cause the rats to slip and fall to the ground below.

### *Hunting Traps*

The hunting trap used by the tribe to hunt large animals like the wild boar is made to be utilized in flat areas or in areas which has a relatively large space. It is fashioned in such a way that the trapped animal is not hurt in the process but is also guaranteed not to escape. This way the trapped animal is caught in a more humane fashion.

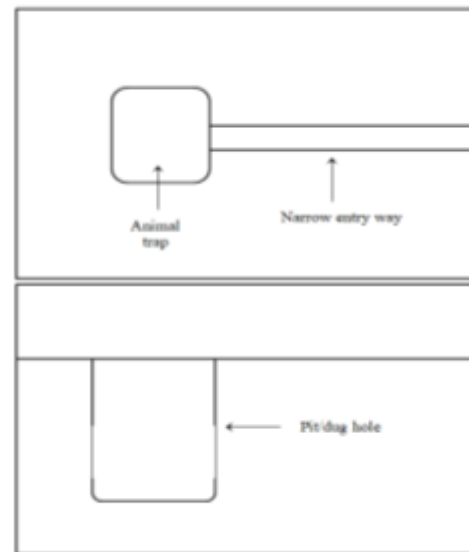


Figure 7. Computer-generated interpretation of the illustration of an animal trap used by the Yapayao-Isneg tribe during hunting. Above: Top view of the trap; Below: Cross-section of the trap.

From the illustrations of the animal trap given in figure 7, it could be observed that the design of the passage way is very narrow that it could only accommodate one animal at a time. More so, any animal that passes through the trap cannot possible turn its back from where it came from thus, it will have no choice but to continue on walking towards the prepared pit at the end. It is created in this way so that the animal is gently lured towards the dug pit located at the end of the fenced passageway.

The hunting party uses fresh grass or hay as bait to lure them into feeding or grazing on the prepared food that litters the fenced passage way. Once the animal reached the end of the passageway it will then be lured to step further on the top part of the pit which is covered by more grasses. When the animal moved in this area and the cover of the pit can no longer resist the weight of the animal, the trapped animal will fall into the hole where escape would be impossible.

### *Healing*



The term “*Durarakit*” is a Yapayao-Isneg language that refers to the local healer. According Mr. Juanito Kabasoy, a durarakit himself who practices healing for almost 41 years in Adams, his way of healing makes advantage of the natural and the spiritual way of healing. When he is treating an ailed person for healing he earnestly prays to their god whom he calls “*Shuba-Yaweh*”. Upon asking who this god is, he had shown from a book he was holding an image that depicts someone who looks like the Lord Jesus performing healing to the poor in a crowded place.

Just like any of the offerings mentioned in previous sections, sacrificial animals that are thought to have the ability to atone the witchcraft done to the person or appease the resentment of the deities are used. Depending on the condition of the sick person, healing by the durarakit ranges from the use of ten sacrificial chickens to a dog, to a goat, to a carabao, then a cow.

When healed, the durarakit prescribe medicinal formulations which are composed of different kinds of medicinal herbs to be taken by the healed person.

#### *Death*

When someone die, the Yapayao-Isneg tribe members performs a ritual called “*Patong*”. In this practice people will play their musical instrument called “*Ganza*” and they will dance the “*Kanyaw*” immediately after the burial. As mentioned, they will sacrifice a dog and during the wake of the deceased, the members of the family will perform the “*pausok*” for three consecutive days. The significance of this practice relies on the belief that together with the smoke produced this method would help the soul of the departed member to enter the gates of heaven in peace.

#### **CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION**

The Yapayao-Isneg tribe is a community with a long-standing rich culture and tradition related to animals that is practiced generations upon generations. The information discovered from the members of the tribes particularly those

who had been oriented by the elders possess a vast library of knowledge that needs to be exposed for others to appreciate their unique qualities.

Through the result of the interviews conducted, it was found that though their beliefs had not been anchored on concrete scientific concepts as it is known in the current century, the idea of science is evident is everything they believe in. With this, the tribe is remarkable in the sense though they are not aware of any scientific basis in what they do they are very much aware of the significance of the uses of the animals in their culture. That for every difficulty and struggles they may experience, for every success and accomplishments they achieve, for every work that needs to be done, there is always a corresponding ritual involving the animals that anchors in their belief that they would be granted favor and protection in the eyes of their god.

Unfortunately, conduct of the research had given the indication that the knowledge that should had been left intact to the people is slowly disintegrating as new generations of Yapayao-Isneg are born into a world that places modernization as its priority. As mentioned by Mr. Ravelo, it is a very saddening truth that the legacy and heritage passed on by the Yapayao-Isneg ancestors cannot be appreciated anymore by the new generations, as time progresses evidence of the “erosion of the culture and tradition” is becoming more and more apparent.

Due to the changes and the challenges in people’s interests and needs, the case of the disintegrating knowledge of the children with regards to the insufficiency of their education in terms of their culture is both very disconcerting and heartbreaking. With this, it is proposed that the members of the tribe, the young and the old be educated in such a way that values laden with an appreciation and love for their own culture are integrated into the system of learning. Taking the knowledge their elders could share into account and placing everything in context

and perspective. The Yapayao-Isneg's tribal knowledge – their belief, their culture, all their desirable tradition, should be restored in all means possible. In this way, the new generation of Yapayao-Isneg will have a solid foundation to anchor their roots on for if not then they will be but memories of what was and what could have been.

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