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Ti Similla

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Rousing kick-off for UP Baguio's Jubilee Year



DEJA VU. UP Baguio students re-enact the Marcos years and the first quarter storm of the seventies, of which UP Baguio was a participant in protest against the dictatorship.



POWERHOUSE TEAM. (From left). Filmmaker, television director, and alumnus Manny Palo; Chancellor Priscilla Macansantos, Vice Chancellor for Administration Beinvenido Marzan, Jubilee Celebration Chairperson Raymundo Rovillos, Office of Public Affairs Director Victoria Costina, and Cultural Committee Co-Chair Arvin Villalon.

Electrifying. The word describes the performance level of all involved in the launching program of UP Baguio's Jubilee year, held on February 15, 2011. Conceptualized by a team led by Jubilee Celebration chairperson, Dean Raymundo Rovillos, and actualized by UPB alumnus and television director Manny Palo, the program took the form of theater-in-the-round, with UP Baguio's grounds as creative space for the re-enactment of five decades of Philippine and local history that UPB lived through, and helped shape. The campus's cultural groups utilized song, dance, and drama in historical revisitation; among these numbers were

Cordillera dances, recitative-song-and-dance representations of the "Age of Aquarius," the Marcosian regime and its downfall, the EDSA revolution and the influx of western cultural/popular art forms, including hip-hop. Most impressive were the well-rehearsed, high-energy renditions of each segment. It was one big street party in the end, with Beta Sigma's fireworks lighting up Baguio's night sky and our resolve to stay committed to this campus that has done the UP name proud.

From Chancellor Priscilla Macansantos:

Ang pagdiriwang ng isang kaarawan ay makabulugan at mahalagang "milestone"

para sa tao at sa institusyon. Ito ay nagbibigay pagkakataon sa atin na balikan at rebisabin ang panahong nagdaan, upang pumulot ng aral, at humugot ng inspirasyon sa alaala ng mga pagsubok na ating napagdaanan at napagwagian. Dagdag dito ang pagkakataong pag-isipan at pagplanuban ang susunod pang mga taon at yugto sa buhay ng ating Unibersidad upang bigit na yumabong ang mga programa sa UP Baguio. Pagkakataon din ito upang maipagmalaki natin sa ating komunidad at mga tagapagtaguyod ang ating mga "achievements," at sa ganoong paraan, sila ay makumbinsi na ang UP Baguio ay nararapat lamang suportahan. ■

Political communication and mobilizing public support for Cordillera autonomy

■ By Arellano Colongon, Jr.

Timek is a column that the faculty in the Governance and Public Policy (GPP) Program and the Department of Economics and Political Science (DEPS) write for *Ti Similla*. An Ilocano term which means ‘voice’ in English, *Timek* aims to provide informed alternative perspectives on pressing and relevant issues in the Cordillera based on researches. It also encourages public debate and feedback in order to clarify these issues

An earlier article by Prof. Nimreh Calde in this column describes the current level of effort in revenue generation by local government in CAR as indicator of the region’s future fiscal capability should there be regional autonomy. I would like to follow up on the issue, not by talking about revenues, but by looking into this status of public interest on ‘Cordillera autonomy.’ There are two assertions I would like to make: (a) that there is not enough region-wide public support for the issue *at the moment*, and (b) that a systematic information and education campaign is needed to mobilize a critical mass of support for Cordillera autonomy.

Where is public support?

Since 2007 when the Regional Development Council (RDC)-Cordillera Administrative region (CAR) took the initiative to revive the autonomy issue, there have been efforts to drum up interest and support. For instance, representatives from national line agencies, local governments, the academe, and POs/NGOs in the region attended a workshop at UP Baguio in October 2007 to formulate a research agenda that the participants were expected to take up. To generate the topics, the participants answered the question: “*In order to advance the goal of regional autonomy, what specific questions do you want answered under the theme (1) administrative*



Then Baguio City Congressman (now Mayor) Mauricio Domogan explains the need for regional autonomy during a Cordillera Month Celebration closing program.

Redjie Melvic Cawis PIA

organization, (2) creation of sources of revenues; (3) ancestral domains and natural resource management; (4) personal, family and property relations; (5) regional urban and rural planning development; (6) economic, social and tourism development; (7) educational policies; and (8) preservation and development of cultural heritage?

The themes at the said workshop were the research directions defined by NEDA, which were part of efforts to attain two medium-term goals, namely (a) ‘to prepare voters for an educated vote in the event of a third plebiscite on a new Proposed Organic Act,’ and (b) ‘to raise CAR’s capability for establishing and sustaining regional autonomous governance operation.’ The knowledge expected from researches was

supposed to be used as inputs in public discussions and debates to clarify issues on Cordillera autonomy. Three years later, we know little about any significant knowledge generated specifically resulting from this endeavor. Did any of the institutions pursue these topics? If so, how were they utilized in clarifying the issues of Cordillera autonomy?

In addition, NEDA-CAR also conducted a survey and found out that 41 per cent of the respondents were “not

aware” of the Constitutional provisions for the creation of an autonomous region in the Cordillera. To address this lack, the RDC-CAR initiated information campaigns called ‘IECs’ in tandem with other government agencies targeting the public, the schools, and government officials and employees.

But there seems to be not much media coverage regarding IECs or consultations on Cordillera autonomy until Baguio City Mayor Domogan became chair in 2010 of the “Third Autonomy Drafting Committee” that takes its mandate from the RDC. Mayor Domogan is aggressive in his campaign for support for the drafting of the third Organic Act as indicated by the committee’s strategy. The drafting committee defined five ‘core principles’ as the substantive fo-



cus of public consultations. The inputs of participants in these consultations would be used as bases for drafting the Organic Act for submission to Congress.

In the last three years, the number of consultations and attendance therein indicates mixed responses to the issue of Cordillera autonomy. In 2009, a regional government agency conducted a total of six consultations for government officials and employees. In the last quarter of 2010, in response to the campaign of Mayor Domogan, Mountain Province (MP) Governor Leonard Mayaen called for a provincial consultation on Cordillera autonomy in September. The participants formed a multi-sectoral committee that would lead the subsequent provincial consultations. The sectors represented were the elders, academe, business, religious, and the NGOs. By early December last year, the provincial committee had conducted 10 public consultations, with barangay officials making up the bulk in many of these meetings. The barangay officials asserted the need for barangay level consultations as part of the process.

This is in contrast to the reported 'poor attendance' with 'more vacant than occupied seats' that was reported about the consultation in Baguio City held last December 16, 2010 at the City Hall. Members of an NGO in MP observed that while there seems to be

growing interest on the issue among people in MP, they have not seen the same from other places in the region.

It may be argued that public support needed to bring this matter up to fruition remains wanting as of the moment. It is a fact of politics that while there are arguments for Cordillera autonomy, the amount of public support on this issue is critical to drafting the organic act, legislation in Congress, and eventual ratification in a plebiscite. Thus, the present level of public awareness and support should be raised to a much higher level.

Communication is key

A 'demand' does not always translate to a 'political issue.' This means that decision-makers will not automatically attend to or act upon certain public wants and needs until these matters enter the sphere of consciousness of legislators in congress. To translate the 'demand for Cordillera autonomy' into an organic act, it has to become a 'political issue' and this means creating and mobilizing public support around it. This would require resources and strategies including effective communication between advocates, the public or constituency they represent, and the decision makers.

Political communication could be viewed in terms of how media 'mediate' in interpreting the messages. We can look at 'media effects' such as agenda setting (what to think about by bringing an issue to the attention of the public and decision makers), priming (arriving at opinions and decisions using mental 'shortcuts'), and framing (leading the public and decision-makers to think of an issue from a particular perspective). We still have to see how media covers the substantive issues of Cordillera autonomy. Nevertheless, it is possible to take a cursory look into the content of the consultations that have been conducted as part of an overall strategy of 'political communication' intended towards mobilizing public support for autonomy. In these

IECs, the politicians and advocates directly communicate with the audience to shape their opinion.

The Domogan-led drafting committee identified the following principles to guide discussions on the substance of autonomy: (1) permanent regional identity, (2) non-diminution of existing benefits and powers, (3) nationally paid officials and employees will continue to be paid by the national government, (4) national government subsidy, and (5) continuing support from the national government after the period of subsidy. During consultation in MP, the participants from the barangays did not limit themselves to merely listening to the constitutional provisions of the lay on autonomy or to giving suggestions. They asked hard questions about benefit-sharing from the use of natural resources or how they can benefit from the taxes collected from companies utilizing the Cordillera's riches. For instance, the consultations in Sagada, Sabangan and Tadian yielded questions about what to do with national laws that prevent them from utilizing our forest resources, or water resources for dams that are now in private control. There were also questions about how to prevent an 'Ampatuan-type' of political

**On 15 July 1987,
a new politico-geographic
subdivision of the
Philippines known as the
"Cordillera Administrative
Region,"
was created through EO 220.**

violence that happened in Maguindanao, which is part of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. Other questions were about corruption and the preservation of the region's culture and identity.

continued on page 12

Mag-arambahan tayo: Mangyan Syllabary and Poetry

■ By Anna Christie Torres

The Baguio community had a rare sampling of Mangyan culture last 26 January 2011 when the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC), in cooperation with the UP Baguio Committee on Culture and the Arts (CCA) and the Mangyan Heritage Center (MHC) hosted two lectures on Mangyan script and the ambahan.

Mangyan is a generic term for eight groups of indigenous peoples with their own name, language and customs. These groups live in Mindoro, the Philippines' seventh largest island. The island is divided into two provinces, Oriental and Occidental Mindoro. The island's population is estimated at 1 million, 10 percent or 100,000 of who are Mangyan.

Lolita Delgado Fansler, seasoned NGO volunteer and freelance writer and president of the Mangyan Heritage Center, an archive and research institution in Calapan, clarified that out of the four Philippine groups that have maintained their original syllabary, two are Mangyan, the Buhid and the Hanunoo, respectively. These two groups were recognized as National Cultural treasures in 1997 and were inscribed in the memory of World Registers of the UNESCO in 1999. Delgado Fansler cited the efforts of Dutch anthropologist and Mangyan historian, Antoon Postma in helping to educate both local and international audiences on the richness of Mangyan culture.

This staunch advocacy was echoed by the second lecturer, Restituto Pitogo, who looked into the ambahan, the indigenous song-poetry of the Hanunoo Mangyan. The ambahan is a "set of poetic expressions with a measured rhyme of seven-

syllable lines rhyming at the end syllables ... and is recited for the purpose of verbalizing in a metaphorical way certain human situations or characteristics" (Postma, 2005, 8). The ambahan is engraved on bamboo joints or slats with the aid of a small knife. According to Pitogo, himself a veteran social development worker, the ambahan expresses an integrated eco-centric life that helps the Mangyan overcome external pressures and survive. Pitogo recently translated into Filipino Postma's *Mangyan Treasures*, a compilation, translation (into English) and explanation of numerous ambahan in a book titled *Nagmamagandang loob po! Ang pamana ng ginintuang ambahan ng mga Hanunuo Mangyan para sa likas-kayang kaginbawaan ng sambayanang Pilipino*.

Cultural expression in the face of globalization

At the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, an ambahan was featured at the façade of the Philippine pavilion to highlight the Expo's theme of "natural wisdom." Through the use of laser beams, the

ambahan was carved into the bits of fabric that looked like a cross-section of a coconut to emphasize the coconut-based motif of the pavilion. Three versions of this five-line

ambahan – Hanunoo Mangyan, Japanese and English appeared side by side for the duration of the Expo. Talk about the wonders of technology and global cultural interaction.

The Mangyans of Mindoro: MYTH & MEANING

A Glimpse of the Mangyan, the Indigenous Peoples of Mindoro

Come and discover the rich Mangyan culture and heritage and learn to write your name in the Mangyan script in a lecture to be conducted at the College of Social Sciences - AVR of UP Baguio.

The lecture will be conducted by Emily Catapang, executive director of the Mangyan Heritage Center. The Mangyan Heritage Center is a not-for-profit, non-government organization promoting the Mangyan culture with various projects.

Mangyan is the collective name for the eight indigenous peoples (IP) groups living in Mindoro island. Estimated to be 10% of the total population of Oriental and Occidental Mindoro, there are over 100,000 Mangyans, have eight different languages and cultural traditions.

Out of the 110 IP groups in the Philippines today, the Hanunuo and Buhid Mangyans are two out of only three IP groups in the Philippines who have retained their original syllabary. The Buhid and Hanunuo Mangyan syllabary systems have been declared as National Cultural Treasures in 1997 and inscribed in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 1999.

The Mangyans possess a rich and distinctive cultural and literary heritage. They use various traditional musical instruments during traditional special occasions and courtship rituals: *salilat*, *batok*, *gong*, and *pan's karga*, using a pointed beak. Mangyans also use the system of bamboo writing on the forepart of bamboo slats. Their ambahan expresses an allegorical way through the use of poetic language, certain situations or characteristics referred to by the use of reciting the poems.

The Hanunuo and Buhid Mangyan scripts and ambahan are inscribed in various traditional and modern media. The Hanunuo Mangyan script is inscribed in various traditional and modern media. The Hanunuo Mangyan script is inscribed in various traditional and modern media.

line-up of activities

25-28 JANUARY 2011
PHOTO EXHIBIT: MANGYAN SCRIPT WRITING
VENUE: UP BAGUIO MAIN LIBRARY

2:30-4PM, 26 JANUARY 2011
LECTURE: TWO LECTURES ON MANGYAN SCRIPT AND POETRY
BY MHC PRESIDENT, MS. LOLITA FANSLER & MR. RESTI PITOGO
VENUE: UP BAGUIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AVR

4-5:30 PM, 27 JANUARY 2011
FILM-SHOWING: "PAANG WALANG SAPLOT" VIDEO DOCUMENTARY
LECTURE: "A GLIMPSE OF THE MANGYANS: THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF MINDORO"
BY MHC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MS. EMILY CATAPANG
VENUE: UP BAGUIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AVR

ORGANIZED BY: MANGYAN HERITAGE CENTER
CO-ORGANIZED BY: COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS OF UP BAGUIO
CORDILLERA STUDIES CENTER
THE UP BAGUIO MAIN LIBRARY

Globalization marks the emerging economic, political and cultural inter-relationships and inter-dependences between and among different societies and parts of the world. Japan, with its *haiku* and *tanka* poetic traditions may have found an imagined affinity with the ambahan, thus the presumed 'equal billing' in the economic and political extravaganza of the Exposition. Likewise, in a manner of speaking, the novel attraction subverts "one-directional cultural homogenization" (Hall in Anheir and Isar, 2010, xi), that may ultimately transform uniqueness and diversity into uniformity.

The ambahan, a vital component of a "lived culture" of everyday Mangyan life has become "a self-conscious collective project" (Anheir and Isar, 2010, 6). In its contemporary socio-economic context and translated form, the ambahan's new terrain is defined. It is a terrain which Stuart Hall describes as one wherein "cultural practices interact with the global character of creativity, innovation and cultural expression" (Hall in Anheir and Isar, 2010, xi). The specter of homogenization may loom amidst this collective project but perhaps, for as long as long as the Mangyan creators and the ambahan as cultural expression refuse to be frozen in the past and continue to be "more negotiable, translatable and open-weave" (ibid.), both creators and cultural expression will live up to the reputation of being what Pitogo calls the "living icon of the Mangyan free spirit." ■

*Says the shiny firefly
Looking at the woodpecker
Hey, my dear friend over there
We should meet and become friends
At the quiet water place.*

Laboratory Mathematics for Student Survival

■ By Karen Ballada

As the saying goes, “We cannot live without mathematics...” This was once again proven as junior- and senior-year Biology majors of UP Baguio attended a Workshop on Laboratory Mathematics (Lab Math) held last January 10, 2011 at the College of Science Audio Visual Room, UP Baguio. The workshop was organized by the Biology Department in cooperation with the CS Lecture Series Committee.


The highlight of the workshop was a review of the basic concepts on unit conversions between and within the English and metric systems, as well as calculations of the concentrations and dilutions of compounds dissolved in liquid solutions. The workshop reviewed computations involving the molar and normal concentrations of various chemical solutions, serial dilutions purity assays, and basic unit conversion techniques. The participants were asked to solve a series of problems based on computation techniques that were discussed. The exercises were designed to be a refresher course (and a wake-up call as well) for biology students. All topics that were covered by the workshop are essential skills in biological research and even in the day-to-day activities of scientists.

The resource speaker was no other than *Balik Scientist* Dr. Paul Mark B. Medina, an advocate of science education and research. Dr. Medina undoubtedly enjoys doing research involving molecular biology and genetics.


After obtaining his BS Biology degree at UP Diliman, Dr. Medina spent a few years teaching various undergraduate courses in UP Diliman and in UP Baguio. He eventually left for the United States


to pursue graduate studies at the University of North Carolina (UNC) in Chapel Hill. While there, Dr. Medina earned his MSc and PhD in Biology degrees on plant biosystematics and fungal genetics, respectively. He immediately followed this with 5 years of postdoctoral research with a neuroscience laboratory where he applied his skills in genetics to study the dendrite development of neurons. Interspersed with his research work, Dr. Medina got involved in several science outreach events. After his postdoctoral experience, Dr. Medina became the Science Education and Outreach Coordinator of the UNC School of Medicine. He specialized in mentoring underrepresented biomedical graduate students, both in their academics and in their research, and in creating science outreach initiatives for pre-collegiate students.

Other lectures by Dr. Medina:



Department of Biology
College of Science
University of the Philippines – Baguio
Governor Pack Road, Baguio City 2600





Seminars on Model Organisms

by Dr. Paul Medina, DOST - Balik Scientist

Seminar Schedules:

- **14 February 2011, Monday**
Model Organisms in Biological and Biomedical Research
 - *E. coli* and Yeasts as Model Organisms
 - *Arabidopsis* and *C. elegans* as Model Organisms
 - Mice/Rats as Model Organisms

Venue: UP Baguio
Fees: PhP 1,000 – Regular Rate
PhP 500 – Student Rate

- **07 March 2011, Monday**
Drosophila as Model Organisms
 - Lectures
 - Hands-On Training

Venue: UP Baguio
Fees: PhP 1,200 (limited to 30 participants only)

Dr. Paul Medina is an advocate of science education and research. After obtaining his BS Biology degree at UP Diliman, Dr. Medina spent a few years teaching various undergraduate courses in UP Diliman and in UP Baguio. He eventually left for the United States to pursue graduate studies at the University of North Carolina (UNC) in Chapel Hill. While there, Dr. Medina conducted research in plant biosystematics and fungal genetics to earn his MS and PhD degrees in Biology respectively. He immediately followed this with 5 years of postdoctoral research in a neuroscience lab where he applied his skills in genetics to study dendrite development of neurons. Interspersed with his research work, Dr. Medina got involved with several science outreach events which he found to be a worthwhile endeavor. After his postdoc experience, Dr. Medina became the Science Education and Outreach Coordinator of the UNC School of Medicine. He specialized in mentoring underrepresented biomedical graduate students, both in their academics and in their research, and in creating science outreach initiatives for pre-collegiate students.
Dr. Paul Medina is in the Philippines through DOST's Balik Scientist program (short-term). He is currently hosted by UP Baguio, UP Manila and DMMMSU.

For reservations, payments or inquiries, write to Dr. Rommi Dizon (rommibol@yahoo.com)

Dr. Paul Medina is in the Philippines through DOST's Balik Scientist program (short-term). He is currently hosted by UP Baguio, UP Manila and DMMMSU. He is also currently handling Cell and Molecular Biology and an undergraduate seminar course at the Department of Biology. ■

Statistics and Science Research: PSSN holds regional meet

■ By Melba Patacsil

A major event in the Philippine Society for the Study of Nature (PSSN)'s celebration of its 10th year anniversary was a National Convention held last October 2010. A finale of the PSSN's anniversary year was a one-day regional convention held to update teachers and researchers in the region on the statistical aspect of science research. The theme of the convention was **"Stat is eeks: Basic Statistics for Teaching and Research"** and was held last December 13, 2010 in cooperation with the UPB Department of Biology.

With an overwhelming turnout of 103 participants, the convention venue had to be transferred to the larger UPB Alumni Building instead of the CS Audio Visual room which can accommodate about 50 participants only. The convention was aimed to help teachers and students understand basic statistics. Dr. Romi Dizon shared his expertise, discussing the different types of statistics and how these are applied in research. In addition, Dr. Lafrankie launched his book entitled **"Trees in Tropical Asia."** He also shared his expertise on how to do research in ecol-

ogy and the application of probability in research.

And because it was PSSN's anniversary year, the organizers decided to inject fun and games into the serious topics in between breaks. The holiday season further helped turn the atmosphere into a Christmas party for the PSSN regional chapter.

The members of the PSSN secretariat were amazed by the attendance in the convention, first because the number of participants was more than what we expected and second, because of the closeness that developed among the participants during the convention. Breaks in between the lectures became the time for sharing ideas and experiences in teaching and research. The convention became



The participants of the regional convention

not only a venue for learning but also a venue of gathering members of PSSN together, to get to know each other well and learn to work together. One of the goals of PSSN is to encourage collaborative work and research among educators and researchers from the different schools and institutions in the region. ■



Registration desk

(from left) Dr. Zenaida Baanan, Prof. Rocel Ortega, Noreen Folloasco

Riding Trains in Kuala Lumpur, Hopping Buses in Melaka

■ By Reuben Muni

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It is 11 o'clock in the evening, the 11th day of January 2011. I have just visited the Petronas Twin Towers and I'm aboard a train that will take me to my hotel in Petaling Jaya. I took the train from Ampang Park, though had I known better I wouldn't have walked the extra kilometer and just rode the train from the KLCC station. I will be getting off the Asia Jaya station and walk some 10 minutes to the hotel where participants to the Industrial Transformation

International Conference on "Innovations and Sustainability Transitions in Asia" are billeted. But as they always say, it's a learning experience. From where I am seated I could see the Petronas in all its alluring beauty, its lights that hug its silvery frame are like fireflies gathering around two gigantic bottles of expensive perfume. I can hear at least five languages being spoken, Bahasa Malaysia, English, an Indian language (it could be Tamil), a Chinese language (it could be Mandarin), and Arabic. This is not surprising, for I am in Malaysia, truly Asia, as what its tourism board claims.

Earlier in the day, Prof. Leah Abayao of UP Baguio's Department of History and Philosophy and I took the same train from Asia Jaya, got off at the KL Sentral station and took the train to the Bukit Jalil station, where the bus terminal is located. A two-hour bus ride took us to the historical city of Melaka, more popularly



Ben Muni (*extreme left*) and Prof. Leah Abayao, trying their musical skills with a gamelan at the Museum of Asian Art, University of Malaya. Prof. Abayao seems to have a future as a gamelan musician, according to the museum guides.

known to tourists as Malacca. The bus ride gave us a glimpse of Malaysia's North-South Highway, amidst hectares and hectares of palm oil plantations on what were once forested lands. Though the distance from Kuala Lumpur to Melaka is about 150 kilometers, it only took us two hours to get to the Melaka Central bus station. From Melaka Central, we took Bus Number 17 that took us to Jonker Walk, the heart of the *entrèpot* that Malacca is. The entire trip from the Asia Jaya station up to Jonker Walk only cost around 18 Malaysian ringgits (that's around 260 pesos).

Perhaps you are wondering why I am putting so much emphasis on the details of this trip. Being an admirer of efficient public transport systems, I cannot help but wonder how Malaysia was able to develop such an efficient and affordable public transport system. I read somewhere that this is one of the best indicators of the economic development of a country. Many countries that have efficient and in-

expensive public transport systems are economically progressive, a hypothesis that I tested to be correct in the case of Malaysia.

Malaysia is a country of contrasts, where the old meets the new, East meets West, the past and the future, all swirling in the humid tropical heat of this country located just below the equator. Just like in the old days, Malaysia continues to be a hub of all sorts. Business, religious, academic and culture organizations crisscross one another's

paths as they all strive to make their presence felt in the bustling metropolis. Just by walking in the streets of Kuala Lumpur, one could sense the embodiment of the word "multicultural" and "multi-ethnic." A veiled Malay woman gives me the ticket to the Monorail. An Indian taxi driver asks me in Bahasa Malaysia where I want to go and I reply in English. He then takes me right at the doorstep of my hotel. A Chinese university professor gives me tips on how to maximize my short trip to Malacca. An Irish man asks me how the Philippines looks like and seems to be genuinely interested in visiting the country in his next Asian adventure. These are just some of the scenarios in Malaysia. There is so much to see that you need an extra pair of eyes to see more.

I enjoyed the two-day conference at the University of Malaya's sprawling campus. Aside from the engaging discussions on pressing issues related to sustainable development and meeting new, like-minded



people, the UM landscape is already enjoyable in itself. Its terrain reminds me of UP Los Baños. Its classrooms and facilities, however, remind me of Ateneo de Manila. Take note that it is a state-funded university. I cannot help but wonder what our government has done to our education sector. I know it's too late to say this, but no to budget cut in education! I marvel how a former colony like Malaysia could have overtaken us in a matter of two to three decades. Of course, you can always say that theirs is a different political, historical, and economic context. Still, whenever I see Malay people who look exactly like Filipinos in facial and bodily features, I wonder what makes them so different from us. Are we really *that* different from them?

I presented a paper entitled "Emerging Agricultural Technologies in the Philippines: The Link between Food Security, Individual Well-Being and Human Connectedness," a sociological essay I wrote for one of my graduate courses. I borrow the words from the abstract I submitted to the conference's organizing committee to describe what it is about:

"The idea of agriculture as the Philippines' chief economic activity for its many citizens seems to

give to many people the impression of an antiquated mode of economic planning and policy-making. Many of these Filipinos seem to have forgotten how much effort it takes in order for them to enjoy their food on the table. They also seem to

fail to notice what agriculture, not only as an economic activity but as a whole way of life, a culture, could contribute to nation-building, to use a multi-faceted term. It is in this light that I would like to present a discussion on how emerging agricultural technologies could play a role in jumpstarting once again the agricultural sector in the Philippines, with the hope that this could create a series of individual and structural changes on how we look at agricultural activity as both an economic and socio-cultural activity. What I would like to show here are: first, the potential contributions of emerging agricultural technologies to alternative visions of socio-economic de-

velopment; second, the individual and personal dimensions in the use of emerging agricultural technologies; and third, the challenges that confront the use of emerging agricultural technologies and what can we do to promote and sustain the use of these emerging agricultural technologies. The relationship of these emerging agricultural technologies to food security, environmental protection, poverty alleviation, rural traditions, and sustainable development is discussed and examined in a Foucauldian fashion by way of an interrogation of how discourses on agriculture have been dominated by *scientiae* (to borrow Foucault's use of the term in the *History of Sexuality Vol. II*) and how the potentials of an agriculturally-sensitive culture and lifestyle could pave the way for the *ars* to reclaim its role in society.

The use of the term "*emerging agricultural technologies*" in this paper refers to three important and yet underappreciated alternative agricultural technologies that have gained some prominence in the Philippine agricul-



tural sector from the early 1990s up to the present, namely: 1) urban agriculture; 2) organic farming; and 3) leisure farming and/or agricultural tourism. This however does not mean that it has also gained full acceptance among the predominantly small-scale farmers in the country. On the contrary, much of these technologies that will be tackled in this paper to advance my discussion on the role that they play to contribute to individual well-being and to promote human connectedness are largely limited to middle-class farmers who have come to know them and appreciate their potentials because of their education and socio-economic backgrounds. This claim, however, will be examined and ways on how to go forward with the development of these emerging agricultural technologies will also be discussed.”

The paper was well-received by an international academic audience and I am happy about it. Prof. Abayao presented a paper with the title “Cultural Resilience and Sustainable Innovation Systems of the Ifugaos in Northern Philippines.” It was also well-received and praised for its originality.

The trip to Malacca was one of the best trips I ever had, despite it being just a short one. Jonker Walk, one of the most popular areas in the city, is a visual feast and gastronomic delight rolled into one. Chinese, Hindu, Muslim, Portuguese, and British influences crowd the landscape of this historic Malay port. It used to be and is still one of the busiest transport, business and cultural hubs in Southeast Asia and maybe even in Asia. Remnants of its colorful past blend with the trends of the present while clues to what the future holds for this city are starting to jut out into the sky. While admiring Chinese, Indian and Malay curios and antiques, one can also find boutiques that sell Ameri-



can and European designer wear and Crocs. The old meets the new, East meets West. Portuguese-built Catholic churches, Confucian, Buddhist and Hindu temples, and a Muslim mosque all compete for attention while a construction frenzy of Mediterranean-inspired hotels looms in the background. The past is firmly entrenched in the ground while the future starts to hover in its skyline. In many senses, Melaka, as this city is called by its people, is a picture of an all-continuity thesis on globalization. In this part of the world, globalization started more than 500 years ago.

As I enter my hotel room a little past midnight, my tired body is starting to tell me to get some rest. It's already January 12. A good friend will celebrate his 28th birthday in Manila. I start to think about how I will pack my things, for tomorrow I head back to Manila. I look out into the Malaysian night sky, the incandescent lights of the Kuala Lumpur nightscape tell me to stay. I go to the bathroom, prepare a bubbly mixture of bath foam and water, and sit back and relax in the bath tub.

My muscles are enjoying the warm embrace of the water in the tub. I let my mind wander as I think about what happened within the last three days of my trip to Malaysia. Thoughts come in and start to settle. I will come back here someday, I tell myself. But for now, it's time to go home to the Philippines, where my heart is.

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Bringing Home the Championship

■ By Jennifer Inovero



SCUAA picture in 1993

The UP Baguio basketball women, chess (women) and table tennis (men and women) varsity teams left Baguio for Ifugao State University in Lamut, Ifugao in the morning of February 1, 2011, Tuesday, to compete in the Cordillera Administrative Region-Association of State Universities and Colleges (CAR-ASUC). The CAR-ASUC is the regional elimination in the Cordillera where winners and selected players from the different participating schools further competed in the 2011 State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA) National Olympics (formerly PASUC National Olympics) on February 21-26, 2011 at Ilagan, Isabela.

The CAR-ASUC is participated in by the different universities and colleges in the region, namely the Abra State Institute of Science and Technology (ASIST), Mountain Province State Polytechnic College (MPSPC), Apayao State College (ASC), Kalinga Apayao State College (KASC), Benguet State University (BSU), Ifugao State University (IFSU), and the University of the Philippines Baguio (UPB). On the other hand, the SCUAA is participated in by regional selections

from Regions I to XII, CARAGA region, National Capital Region (NCR), and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

In the 1993 SCUAA, I was a member of the then CAR delegation in basketball women that also competed in the same venue in Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela. Our team was composed of BSU and UPB athletes.

The team came from a good BBEAL performance and we emerged as 3rd runner up among

With these, I was certain that the team will also be able to finish well in the CAR-ASUC.

Our off-season training started in December 2010. The off-season is the best time for rehabilitating injured athletes, working out each player's weaknesses, further strengthening their skills and mastering fundamentals of the sport. When we were informed that we will compete in the CAR-ASUC, I told my players that this is a very rare chance for the team to experience such a level of competition and an opportunity for various experiences (in addition to team bonding of course) which they will never forget in their entire life. However, there are also equally important things to consider, especially their academic requirements, the team's safety and other personal concerns.

Training for a competition is not easy. The team underwent training at noon on Mondays in the open court (to get used to the hot weather, though suffering from the pollution around), and until late nights on Wednesdays and Fridays. We also had tune-up



UPB delegates to the 2011 CAR-ASUC at the opening ceremony, February 21, 2011, IFSU oval

seven (7) participating schools, ranking next to the three 'big' (private) schools in the league (SLU, UC and UB). We bested all other participating teams which through the years gave us a really hard time inside the playing court. Hard work, discipline and a big heart to win marked our games.



Day 1 'ocular' at the open court, IFSU

games against SLU and the Baguio team (selection) that will compete in the CARAA (high school counterpart of the CAR-ASUC) to better prepare the team and increase the level of their game.

After traveling for four and a half hours via Ambuklao road, the team arrived in Lamut, Ifugao, shortly after lunch. After taking some time to rest, we went around the campus to see the actual venue of our games. A solidarity night for coaches was held in the evening, where the schedule of games was made. At the same time, our first night in Ifugao was also the start of a 'new bonding' experience for the team, playing cards and chatting to while away idle time.

All succeeding mornings from day 2 of our stay there in IFSU were spent doing strength exercises (250 crunches and 100 push ups) before breakfast. The opening parade started at 9am and our first game versus Abra was played in the same afternoon, with the team winning by 47 points.

The following day, February 3, Thursday, we had our game against BSU, the strongest contender for the team. Played with a big heart and strong determination to win, we won against them, gaining an 11-point advantage. With this victory, we earned a twice to beat advantage over the winner between BSU and MPSPC. In the afternoon, we went around the campus again, ate some street food and got all the UP Baguio flags to bring home with us.

The championship game was played on Friday, February 4, against BSU, where the team won by 9 points at the end of regulation time, bringing pride to UP Baguio again, as the team (plus some selected players from other teams) will represent CAR in the SCUAA. ■



Day 1: at IFSU main gate



After winning the championship



(2nd row L to R) Merryl Anne Esther Bastillo, Ivy Rose Ando, Nierque Louis Taruc, Faith Carmela Relente, Ludy Ann Yambao, Rhemalyn Joy Tagata, Maridel Dimaculangan, (1st row L to R) Coach Ivy Inovero, Rozelle Perucho, Marion Jezelle Diaz, Elisha Ramos, Nina Lanciola

Cordillera Autonomy, from page 3

These consultations are instructive in terms of what people, at least as demonstrated by those in MP, are ready to discuss in these fora. The IECs require an appropriate design that shall meet the expectations of the participants in terms of the substance of discussions that they are ready to tackle if the advocates have to achieve a desired ‘framing’ of the issues. Experts say that ‘a central concern in communication campaign planners and evaluators during approximately the past 50 years has been to determine whether or not campaigns are effective.’ However, they observed that ‘a pervasive error in evaluating a program or agency is to judge it by the effort expended rather than the effect produced.’ For one, the messages should be clear when responding to questions. Another agency’s IEC conducted in 2009 for government officials and employees is a good starting point in determining the ‘most frequently asked questions’ about regional autonomy. This is especially important considering that one of the problems identified that caused rejection in the past plebiscites was ‘lack of information.’

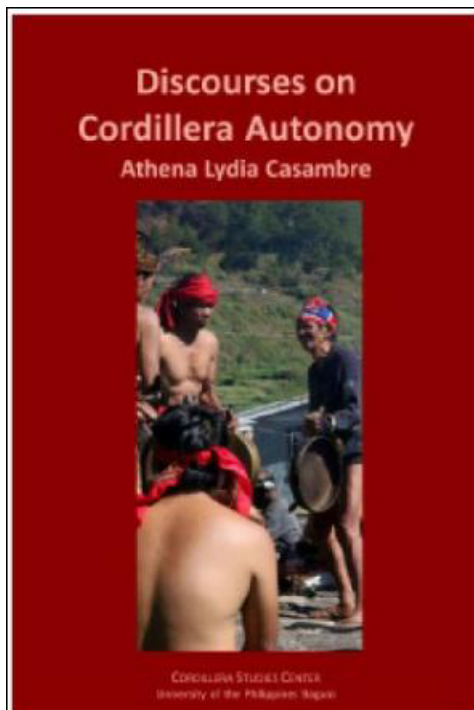
The agency was tasked to inform and educate government officials and employees on the constitutional provisions on Cordillera autonomy; gather feedback of government officials and employees on autonomy; and enlighten, clarify, and correct misinterpretations or disinformation on autonomy. While it has some level of success in achieving the first two objectives, it has work to

do to achieve the last. Its IEC requires re-designing and looking into the content of the presentations and the extent to which they helped clarify the misinterpretations and distorted views. Since the objective was to clarify misinterpretations, it would help achieve this objective if the designers of the IEC could decide on a list of core issues of regional autonomy; and how these issues were misinterpreted or distorted in the past. Casambre’s (2010) *Discourse on Cordillera Autonomy* (published by the Cordillera Studies Center, UP Baguio) provides some insights on this topic.

There are also frequently asked questions (FAQs) that could be gleaned from the comments and questions posed during the open forum sessions of the IECs. These are: (1) What is ‘regional autonomy’? What is it that the people of the Cordillera distinctly want that cannot be achieved under the existing institutional structures and mechanisms? (2) What specific provisions did people not like in the past versions of the Organic Act? What amendments can be made? (3) How do we ensure that ‘non-Cordillerans’ are not marginalized? (4) What will be the procedure for drafting the Organic Act, and who would be involved? How do we mobilize the support of the different sectors (NGOs/POs, local officials, citizens)? And (5) What lessons can be learned from the (organizational) experiences of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)?

These questions were echoed in the

public consultations in MP in 2010. Other questions are not about definitions, but require getting into the essential elements of why ‘regional autonomy’ is still required, given the existing institutional mechanism to resolve social, economic, and political problems of the region. This goes deeper into the ‘core issues’ that will serve as basis for refining the communication strategy for the third objective of the IEC. Designers of the IEC campaign could then prepare a consistent message to communicate in response to these “FAQs on Cordillera Autonomy.”■



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