

Ilongots – an indigenous society of the philippines

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It is also known as Bugkalots. It is considered to be one of the Igorots tribes living in the north.

Geography

Ilongots are living within the east mountains of Luzon called the Sierra Madre and the Caraballo Mountains. Ilongot are a forest people that live in Nueva Vizcaya Province in Luzon. Numerous rivers and dense tropical rainforests define Ilongot territory, covering Nueva Vizcaya, and parts of Nueva Ecija and Quirino.

House

In the past the Ilongot made their houses either on trees or on poles raised 2-3 meters from the ground for protection. The Floors and platforms were made of bamboo or rattan-bound tree stems, walls were of palm, rattan, or grass. The roof inclined towards the top, which was decorated with a wood fixture curved like horns, an Ilongot trademark. Houses were fenced in by dead trees and greenery and approached by way of a secret entrance barricaded with bamboos with pointed tips. The modern Ilongot house is about 4 X 5 meters large, and elevated some 5 meters above the ground by wooden posts. The basic framework is of bamboo, rattan, anahaw leaves, and runo stalks. The house may shelter several families. Each family reserves a corner of the slightly raised sides of the room for its own fireplace and storage area. All sleep on the unpartitioned dipped floor at the center of the room. The interior of the house is often decorated with animal skulls. Dogs guard the single door, both an entrance and exit. A platform may be constructed outside, and the bottom of the house used for domesticated animals.

Economy

The Ilongot are sustained mainly by fishing and hunting. They fish with nets and traps and sometimes dive to shoot larger fish with bow and arrow.

Groups of men are led by dogs to hunt for boar and deer. Food production is a lesser work. Using the kaingin method, the Ilongot plant sugarcane, coconuts, rice, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, squash, and other vegetables.

They also fold food such as shellfish from the streams and roots, palms, fruits, honey, and beeswax from the forests. Food is prepared by boiling, roasting, or smoking and preserved by smoking and salting.

Minerals are scarce, and trade limited. Tobacco and meat are traded for metal weapons, salt, pots, clothes, and other necessities from the lowlands. However, the Ilongot craft many of their goods, such as multipurpose tool, and arms like the gayang and sinamongan. Baskets and nets are woven from tubeng. A local yeast is used to create basi (sugarcane wine). Travelling through the forest requires walking or running on rattan, some 12 meters long, looped over one tree and hooked onto another.

Political System

Ilongot leadership is based on ability and age, and at the highest level remains absolute and valid until death. When the chief dies, he is replaced by his assistant, a new assistant is selected. The ceremonial powers of the local shaman, the nigudu, can sometimes extend to sociopolitical matters. The elders settle conflicts between beganganat and nigudu should they arise. Ilongot common law prohibits murder, adultery, deceit, theft, work on each fifth day, wives' disobedience of their husbands, and nonpayment of debts. Crimes are usually punished by fines and beatings. The families of

offenders are partly accountable for the offenses thus, they are involved in the settlement of both civil and criminal cases. The families of criminals are partially responsible for the offenses thus, they are involved in the settlement of both civil and criminal cases.

Marriage

Ilongot marriages are generally monogamous and enduring. Meaning a person can only marry one bride. Future marriage partners usually exchange gifts, work together in the fields and have sex before they get married.

Divorce is brought about by critical financial problems, the commission of a crime, or broader divisions between groups. For instance, relatively more divorces were recorded during the period of changing political alliances. The divorce is arranged by the parents of the estranged couple. The couple's children are divided: the daughters with the father, the sons with the mother. If the woman commits the offense, she returns the wedding presents to the man's parents.

Clothes

Ilongots do wear plain or dark blue or black loincloths held around the waist by a cagit of either brass wire or rattan. Gabed, a piece of bark cloth, is wrapped around the legs and tied at the front and back with a string belt. Metal bands clasp the left arm, and several rings decorate the fingers.

Ilongot women use bark cloth for their agde. These are matched with blouses which expose the midriffs. Although the Ilongot do not weave cloth, the women embroider competently and make cotton tassels which they tie on their extension stuffs. They also wear panglao (beaded necklaces), kalipan

(earrings), brass arm bands, and small bell accessories. Filed and blackened teeth are considered aesthetically pleasing, and long hair preferred by both sexes. Preadolescent children are often unclothed.

Religion

Recognize a variety of supernatural beings including a creator-overseer deity associated with the sun, as well as ancestral spirits. They are most concerned, however, with nature spirits and illness-giving spirits. The most powerful and feared is ' Agimeng, the " companion of the forest," guardian of hunting and headhunting but also a giver of disease. His female counterpart holds dominion over cultivated fields. Usually related with physical features, disease-giving spirits are identified with typical symptoms and the plants that cure them, and, as familiars, may develop an association with particular individuals.