

ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE YOGADS OF ISABELA

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THREE PLATES

INTRODUCTION

Many ethnographic studies on the different Philippine groups have been undertaken by eminent anthropologists and scientists, yet the Yogads have never been given proper attention, perhaps because of their small number and the similarity of their characteristics to those of the Gaddangs and the Ibanags. The literature references available on the group are very limited, being confined to their dialect, geographic location, and their relation to other ethnic groups. Blumentritt in 1890 only mentioned their geographic location and their relation to the Christianized Gaddangs. Pardo de Tavera in 1901 analyzed the etymology of their tribal name. Worcester in 1906 mentioned them as a part of the Christianized Kalingas of western Isabela. Malumbres in 1918 likewise mentions their geographic location and the relation of their dialect to the Gaddangs. The present writer attempts to present in this short paper a study of their economic and social life, and their dialect. In 1931, when he was officially sent to Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya Provinces to purchase museum specimens, he stayed with this group long enough to become acquainted with it; and, having been given the necessary facilities for ethnographic study, he was able to familiarize himself with the economic and social life of the Yogads, and the peculiarities of their dialect. These studies form the subject of the present discussion.

ORIGIN

The term Yogad, or Iogad, is derived from *ugad*, an Ibanag word meaning elevated garden patches or seed plots.

Se conoce con el nombre de *yogades* (*yogad* ó *gaddanes* a unos montañas que en la actualidad habitan en las vertientes de la cordillera central, límite occidental de la provincia de la Isabela, desde la orilla izquierda del Río Magat, término del Río Mercedes, hasta la jurisdicción de los pueblos cristianos de Itawas.

La etimología de ambos nombres nos la da la lengua ibanag que tanto se parece al gaddan, resultando que *gaddan* y *yogad* tienen la misma significación y origen, sólo que el primero es nombre de lugar y el segundo de tribu. Ambos derivan del radical *gad* cuya forma más antigua *ugad*, existe también en ibanag y significa "sementera alta". Esta raíz, seguida del sufixo *an*, quiere decir "lugar de la sementera alta" como *payaw* vimos que quería decir "sementera baja o de regadío". Los habitantes del *gaddan*, llamados hoy así con este nombre propio de personas, que es *yogad* formado con el prefijo *y* cuyo significado conocemos y el radical *ugad* igual a *gad* que hemos examinado.¹

It is said that the Yogads, who regard themselves as offshoots of the Ibanags, originally came from the town of Enrile, formerly called Cabug, which was established in 1742 in Cagayan Province. Due to the crowded conditions of their native town and the difficulties encountered in the struggle for existence, this sturdy, peace-loving, and adventurous people decided to migrate to Isabela Province, to find a new home and to seek their fortune.

Worcester² states that the Yogads are a part of the Christianized Kalingas of western Isabela. These Kalingas are called Gaddangs, and were Christianized by missionaries.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The Yogads were at one time confined to the level land of the town of Difun, which was established in 1706. The principal towns which they now occupy are Camarag, the oldest town in Isabela, established in 1753, and Echague, Angadanan, Santiago, and Jones, formerly Cabanuangan.

POPULATION

The present number of the group speaking the Yogad dialect is conservatively estimated at 8,000. This number represents those who are regarded as being of pure stock. A few of them have migrated to neighboring provinces where they intermarried with the other Christian groups.

PHYSICAL TYPE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Yogads are predominantly of the Indonesian type with a slight admixture of Negrito and Chinese blood. They vary from reddish brown to dark brown in complexion. They are round-headed, with straight, black hair, dark brown eyes, and a nose

¹ Pardo de Tavera, T. H., *Etimología de los Nombres de Razas de Filipinas*. Manila (1901) 14.

² Philip. Journ. Sci. 1 (1906) 818.

of medium breadth with a low bridge. They are of ordinary size and have unusually regular features. Like other Philippine peoples, they are practically beardless.

CULTURE

The Yogad culture, like that of the other Christian groups of the lowlands, is tinged by Spanish civilization, although the people retain many of their primitive customs and beliefs.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Agriculture.—Formerly the Yogads practiced the *kaiñgin* system of agriculture, planting in cleared forest areas where the soil is loose and fertile. Under this system the small trees and shrubs are cut away and burned, and the large trees are killed.

According to the census of 1918 the climate of the plains occupied by the Yogads is very favorable to the growth of tobacco. The northeast monsoons bring heavy rains, which wash down the fertile mountain soil into the rivers that deposit the silt on the plains. In this manner the tobacco fields are fertilized every year.³

The principal product is tobacco, which is grown in large quantities. The variety of tobacco raised in this region is considered one of the best in the Philippines, and, as one of the principal articles of export, constitutes the wealth of the people. The corn crop is the object of considerable care on the part of the natives, as it constitutes their principal food supply when the price of rice is high. Rice, sugar cane, coconuts, and coffee, grow almost without the care of the planter. A few cattle are raised. The forests are rich in valuable timber, such as *molave*, *ipil*, *narra*, and *camagon*.

Hunting and fishing.—Hunting is carried on to a considerable extent. Wild pigs, carabaos, and deer are caught with snares, traps, and barbed spears that are similar to those of the Bontoc Igorots. The Sierra Madre Mountains are the hunting places of the Yogads.

Cagayan River has an abundant supply of fish, and fishing is one of the principal occupations of the people. Fish are caught with nets, lines, and traps, as well as with small barbed spears, and bows and arrows. Murrel fish constitute the principal catch.

Basketry.—The Yogads do considerable basket work. The principal materials used are bamboo, rattan, and nito. Four

³ Census of the Philippine Islands: 1918 1 (1920) 167.

types of weave are employed; namely, "in and out" or cloth weave, twilling or sawale weave, hexagonal weave, and coiling. Some of their baskets are patterned after those of the Ilocanos and pagan tribes of northern Luzon.

Weaving of textiles and the making of pottery are unknown among the Yogads, who purchase most of their clothing from Ilocano and Chinese traders, and their pots and stoves from the Tinggians and Ilocanos.

Transportation.—The Yogads have transportation by land and water. Their typical land transportation is the cart drawn by a carabao or cow. Riding on horseback is also common on mountain trails.

Their typical water transportation is the raft, or *gakit*, and the dugout canoe, or *abáng*. The *gakit*, which is about 6 meters long, is made of mountain cane, or *bulu*, lashed together by rattan. It is used for transporting across Cagayan River mature tobacco leaves placed in big baskets called *tangkál*. The dugout canoe is used for fishing and passenger transportation.

Dwelling.—The Yogad dwelling is a structure of wood, bamboo, or mountain cane, with a thatched or bamboo roof. This kind of roofing, or *camá*, must be in imitation of the Ilocanos who commonly use it in roofing their houses. The sides or walls are made of sawale or mountain cane split into halves, which are placed so as to overlap one another. The floor is made of wood, sawale, or bamboo. The houses have only one partition and are raised 3 to 4 feet above the ground.

Dress and ornaments.—Yogad dress is similar to that of other Christian groups. The men wear shirt and trousers and the women *camisa* and skirt.

Yogads are not much given to personal ornamentation. Some of the men have tattoo marks on the arms and hands. Necklaces of beads and coconut shells, earrings, and finger rings are also worn to some extent.

SOCIAL LIFE

Music.—The Yogads, like the other Christian Filipinos, are very fond of music. Social gatherings and entertainments are always marked by singing and dancing.

The typical musical instrument of the Yogads is the *cinco-cinco*, a small five-stringed wooden guitar, which is used to accompany songs and dances. Other musical instruments are the *tal-lelet* and the *caralat*, or bamboo rattles. These are percussion bamboo musical instruments, which are played at night

during Holy Week. A band contest for these musical instruments is held by the different barrios at a designated place.

Dances.—The Yogads have four typical dances; namely, *mas-cota*, *a la jota*, *laurenta*, and *balamban*. The first three dances are similar to each other although the music differs. They are danced, to the accompaniment of a cinco-cinco or an accordion, by a man and a woman facing each other. The rhythmic movement of the hands is emphasized. The *balamban* is also danced to particular music by a man and a woman, with special emphasis on the rhythmic movement of the feet. The name of this dance originated from the name of a long fish, called *balamban*, that jumps in the water.

Circumcision.—The Yogads, like some of the other Christian groups, practice circumcision. The boys are usually circumcised at twelve to fourteen years of age. The foreskin or prepuce of the penis is split with a sharp knife. Young guava leaves are masticated and the sap is applied as medicine. It takes ten to fifteen days to heal the wound. This practice is called *banguit*.

Marriage customs.—Generally speaking, the Yogads prefer to marry among themselves. They seldom intermarry with other Christian groups.

Formerly it was customary for the parents to make arrangements for the marriage of their children. Now it is left to the discretion of the boy and the girl. As soon as the boy wants to marry, his parents together with a spokesman go to the girl's parents and ask for her hand. They bring with them a drink, usually gin.

On the third day the spokesman of the boy's parents is told to come again to the house of the girl for the decision of the girl's parents. If the decision is favorable, the parents and relatives of both parties meet on the third day to make the final arrangement for the wedding.

Then the *landai* takes place. This is a feast prepared by both parties prior to the real wedding feast. A sort of poetical joust between the representatives of the boy and the girl usually takes place. While the contest is being held, the girl prefers to stay in the kitchen. The representative of the girl usually yields to the representative of the boy and then they all partake of the feast.

A band of music usually follows the bride and the groom on their way to the church where the wedding ceremony is to be performed.

After the wedding, the friends and relatives of the couple are entertained with a dance. Then follows what is called *gala*, or the giving of money to the couple. Two plates, one for the bride and the other for the groom, are placed on the table. The relatives of the bride and the groom put their money on the respective plates of the couple.

After the *gala*, the so-called *dal-lut* takes place. Only the relatives of both parties take part. It is usually performed at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Some of the male relatives join their hands and some of the female relatives do the same. The male relatives of the couple are allowed by common consent to kiss the female relatives without holding them. After the *dal-lut* the girl goes to the parents of the boy, and the boy to the parents of the girl. Then they live together as husband and wife.

Superstitious beliefs.—The Yogads are a very superstitious people, especially those who live in Barrio Capitan, Echague. They believe in evil spirits, and the *Anitos*, who are said to cause sickness, which, however, may be cured by an *anting-anting*, or amulet.

The *caranġat*, or evil spirits, dwell in certain places, such as bamboo, *balete*, and *andarayan* trees. When a person gets sick, an old man called *maguimun* is summoned to find out whether the sickness is caused by the evil spirits. He asks the sick person where he went or played to ascertain the cause of his sickness. If the sickness is caused by the evil spirits, he takes little pieces of buyo, rolled tobacco leaves, rice (*malagquit*) placed in a coconut shell, and a white chicken and goes to the dwelling place of the spirits. He communes with the spirits, shouting at them and telling them to leave the sick person and to return to their dwelling places for he has prepared food for them. If the sickness of the person is very severe, the *maguimun* cuts the left leg of the chicken and the right leg is tied with a cotton thread. Then he anoints the forehead of the sick person with the chicken's blood. It is believed that the sickness will be cured in this manner.

The *mag-anito* is another common superstitious belief among the Yogads. They go to the forest for three days' festival during the dry season, taking with them pigs and rice. The *maponags*, or women mediums, are the ones who commune with the *anitos*. Part of the pigs is offered to the *anitos*, and the rest is cooked for the members of the party. The share offered to the *anitos* is usually given to the *maponag*. This yearly three-

day festival has to be repeated seven times. It is believed that after seven years the members of the party will be immune from sickness caused by the anitos. During these seven years, the members are not allowed to eat sugar and garlic. Only salt is allowed to be used in their food; nor are they allowed to repair their houses or use a white blanket or curtain.

Burial ceremony.—Before burial, a white handkerchief is spread on the face of the dead person. Then those present pray and leave the dead, except for the one who is to remain to hold the four corners of the handkerchief. As soon as the latter believes that the spirit of the dead is already in the handkerchief, he takes it home and walks around the house. It is believed that on the third day the spirit of the dead will visit them and stay only under the house if such a ceremony is not performed.

The members of the family are not allowed to stoop or look down when the coffin is being lowered into the grave, for it is the belief of the Yogads that he who looks down will also die.

After burying the dead, the members of the family wash their hands and faces with water mixed with burned straw.

For nine nights they pray for the spirit of their dead, every night offering food to the spirit.

DIALECT

The Yogad dialect resembles quite closely Ibanag and Gaddang. Malumbres⁴ states that the Yogad dialect is but modified Gaddang. The Yogads have a peculiar intonation in speaking. They say their prayer in Ibanag. They have no printed literature or periodicals.

It has been observed that the majority of the Philippine dialects lack labial fricatives.⁵ However, this is not true in the case in the Yogad dialect. Like Ibanag and Gaddang, it possesses the surd aspirant *f*, a sound which is very common in this dialect. The original *p* becomes *f* when it is immediately followed by *u*. For example, fire, *afuy*; leg, *uffu*; heart, *futá*; ten, *tafulu*. Judging from the material at hand, the sonant aspirant *v* is not used in the Yogad dialect. The original *b* is persistent. For example; moon, *bulan*; pig, *buhay*; thousand, *taribu*.

⁴ Historia de Cagayán. Manila (1918) 14.

⁵ Conant, C. E., "F" and "V" in Philippine languages, Philippine Ethnological Publications 5 (1908) 135.

LEXICAL COMPARISON

I have selected some of the commonest terms from the work of Otto Scheerer^o to show the affinity of the Yogad dialect to its sister groups of dialect.

Common terms showing the affinity of Yogad to Ibanag and Gaddang.

English	Yogad.	Ibanag.	Gaddang.
sky	langit	langi-t	langit
sun	igao	{aggau matá tal lángui-t	sinag
moon	bulán	bulán	bulan
night	gabi	gabi	gafi
star	bitun	bitún	bitun
fire	afay	afuy	áfuy
water	danum	danúm	dánum
name	ngagan	ngagan	ngan
man	lalaqui	talay	talay
father	ama	ama	ama
woman	babai	babay	bafay
mother	ina	{iná yéna	ina
brother	osgul	osgul	uasi
head	ulú	ulú	ulu
face	muguing	mutung	mutung
nose	igung	igung	iyung
mouth	labi	simu-t	labi
lip	bibig	bibig	bifig
tongue	dilá	jila	dila
tooth	ngipan	ngipan	ngipan
eye	mata	matá	mata
ear	bambang	talinga	layag
neck	lig	bul-lao	lig
heart	fata	{futú puto jutú	fata
belly	san	san	san
knee	tud	{tuad dulóng	tuad
leg	óffu	uffú	uffu
foot	ták-ki	takké	takki
nail	cucu	cucú	cucu
flower	lap-pao	lappau	lappao
root	gammút	gammu-t	gámut
dog	atú	{itu kitu	átu

^o Scheerer, Otto, the Batán dialect as a member of the Philippine group of languages, Philippine Ethnological Publications 5 (1908) 22.

Common terms showing the affinity of Yogad to Ibanag and Gaddang—Ctd.

English.	Yogad.	Ibanag.	Gaddang.
egg	ilug	il-lug	iluk
fish	ikán	sirá	sira
pig	babúy	babuy	bafuy
goat	gánding	knjjing	ganding
snake	irao	iráu	irao
deer	út-ta	uttá	ut-ta
house	binalai	baláy	bálay
bridge	taletai	{talétay balatay}	tét-ay
hunger	bisin	bisin	bisin
thirsty	nauwa-wan	pangál	nauwa-wan
sickness	taquit	taki-t	taquit
one	inté	tádday	tátta
two	addúé	dué	édua
three	tal-lu	tal-lú	talú
four	appát	appá-t	appat
five	limá	lima	lima
six	an-nám	annám	annám
seven	pítú	pítú	pitu
eight	onlú	onlú	ulú
nine	isiám	siám	isiam
ten	táfulu	mafulú	tafúlu
eleven	táfulu tatta	karattadday	tafúlu tátta
twenty	aduáfulu	duá fulu	aduáfulu
one hundred	tágatut	magatú-t	tátut

From the common terms mentioned above, it is evident that the Yogad dialect closely resembles Ibanag and Gaddang. In Yogad and Ibanag the accent appears frequently on the second syllable of the word. For example:

English.	Yogad.	Ibanag.
moon	bulán	vulán
star	bitún	bitán
head	ulú	ulú
heart	futú	futú
root	gammút	gammú-t
four	appát	appá-t
seven	pítú	pítú

Words not marked by an accent, are pronounced as in Yogad and Ibanag. For example:

English.	Yogad.	Ibanag.
belly	san	san
nail	cucu	cucu
hunger	bisin	bisin

In the Gaddang dialect the accent frequently appears on the first syllable of the word. For example:

English.	Gaddang.
fire	áfuy
man	tólay
child	ánac
head	úlu
eye	máta
leg	úfu
nail	cúcu
dog	átu
fish	síra
bridge	tétay
sickness	táquit
one	táta
two	ádua
seven	píta
one hundred	tátut

It is evident that the Yogad and Ibanag dialects have the same intonation in speaking, while that of the Gaddang is different.

SUMMARY

The Yogads belong to the group of Ibanag emigrants who settled in Isabela Province to improve their economic life. Their physical characteristics resemble those of the Christian Gaddangs living in Magat River Valley. Their social life is quite distinct, for they retain many of their primitive customs and beliefs. Their dialect resembles quite closely the dialect groups spoken in Cagayan Province, the home of the Ibanag people.

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE 1

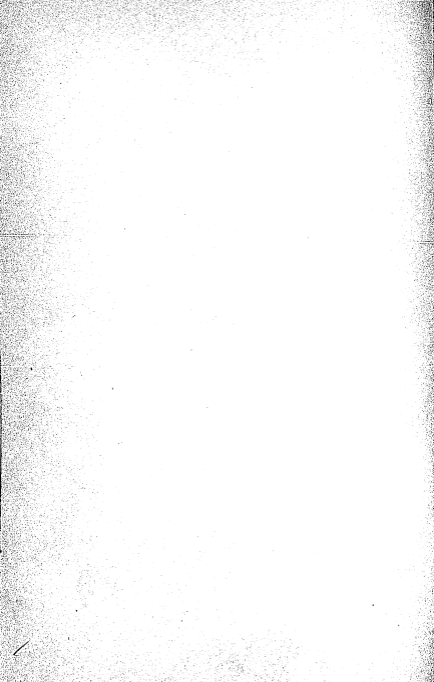
- FIG. 1. A typical Yogad house (*binakai*). Its walls are made of split mountain bamboo strips placed so as to overlap one another.
2. The sledge basket (*tangkal*) used for hauling mature tobacco leaves.

PLATE 2

- FIG. 1. Typical fish spears of the Yogads.
2. The circumcision instrument (*pag-banguit*).

PLATE 3

- FIG. 1. The bamboo rattle (*tal-lelot*).
2. The five-stringed wooden guitar (*cinco-sinco*).



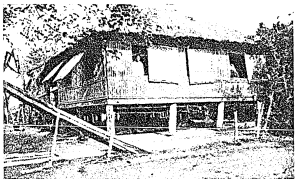


PLATE I.

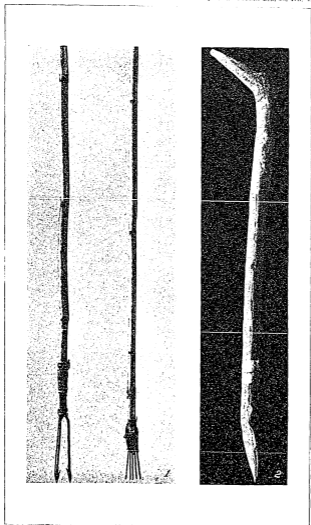


PLATE 2.

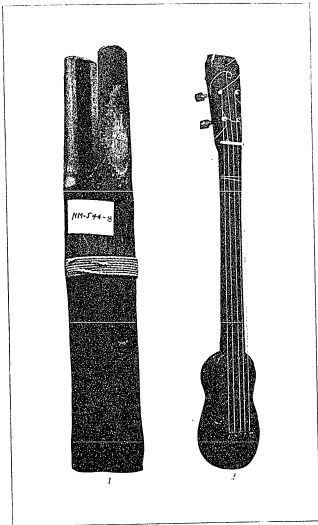


PLATE 3.