

Re-establishing Order in the Community and its Connection with Biodiversity Conservation

by Rudy B. Rodil

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What kind of conflict are we talking about here? Wherever there are opposing forces, there is conflict? If I understand the theme of this seminar correctly, internal and social conflicts and their implications on biodiversity conservation. Tall order. This is the world. To reduce the problem within manageable proportions, let us just talk about conflict among human beings within the society we know as Mindanao.

We need to do a quick rundown of history here to see how social conflicts have resulted in the present relationship among the peoples of Mindanao, more specifically the marginalization of the Lumad and the Moro populations. As we shall see, we have inherited a history and a relationship which are products of various forms of conflict imbedded in colonialism and contemporary history.

Overview of historical and contemporary realities

- Peoples of Mindanao. We generally speak of the tri-people of Mindanao whenever we speak of the settlers, the Muslims and the Lumad as the three main groups of people here. We are aware that they are not the only people of the region. There are also Chinese and other foreigners who have become indigenized. But my feeling is that they are quite able to take care of themselves and need not bother us here for the moment. |

- The Lumad are indigenous peoples of Mindanao, namely, in alphabetical order: the Ata, Bagobo, Banwaon, Bla-an, Bukidnon, Dibabawon, Higaunon, Mamanwa, Mandaya, Mangguwangan, Manobo, Mansaka, Matigsalug, Subanen, Tagakaolo, Talaandig, T'boli, Teduray and Ubo. Other groups not mentioned here belong to sub-groups and do not necessarily constitute distinct tribes. They make up approximately five percent, clearly the minority, of the total Mindanao population in the 1990 census.
- The Muslims, also known as Moro and more recently Bangsamoro, are made up of 11 ethno-linguistic groups, namely Iranun (also known as Ilanun or Ilanum), Jama Mapun, Kalagan, Kalibugan, Magindanao, Maranao, Sama, Sangil, Tausug and Yakan. They constitute about 20 percent of the total population of Mindanao and Sulu. Although generally non-Muslims, the seafaring Sama Dilaut (or Badjao as they outsiders call them) of the Sulu Archipelago are also classified in the Moro category by virtue of their long traditional stay in the Sulu seas.
- Also regarded as indigenous are the Visayan speaking peoples in northern and eastern Mindanao when the Spaniards arrived on the second decade of the 17th century. They eventually became the Christian communities of the Spanish colonial period which in 1892 totalled 191,493. It is no longer easy to identify them because they have assimilated into the migrant Visayan population which now compose the majority in the place. They are known locally by their place names or by some peculiarity in their respective accents: Davaweño in the Davao provinces but mostly in Davao Oriental; Butuanon in Butuan, Camiguinon or Kinamigin in Camiguin island, Cagayanon in Cagayan de Oro City, Misamisnon in Misamis Oriental, Iliganon in Iligan, Ozamiznon in Ozamiz, Dapitanon in Dapitan,

Dipolognon in Dipolog, Chavacano in Zamboanga City and nearby places. The two provinces of Surigao have several local dialects peculiar to the place. Surigaonon, Waya-waya and Djaon-djaon are spoken in the towns of Surigao del Sur, namely, Carrascal, Madrid, Lanuza, and in Surigao del Norte, specifically in the towns of Dinagat, Siargao, Dapa, Gigaquit and Claver. In Surigao del Sur further, Cantilanon is spoken in Cantilan; Tandaganon in Tandag and Aras-asan; Tagon-on in Tago, San Miguel and Bayabas; Kamayo in Lianga, Diatagon, Barobo and Bislig. Cebuano is predominant in Mangagoy and Bol-anon in Cortes and San Agustin.

- The Chavacanos, most of them residing in Zamboanga City, were originally Mardicas or Merdicas, meaning "free people" who were natives of Ternate in the Moluccas, in the present Indonesia. They were Christian soldiers who were brought to Manila by the Spaniards in 1663. They were first settled in Ermita in what was known as Bagumbayan and were, later, resettled at Barra de Maragondon or the sandbar of Maragondon river; they called this Ternate in 1850 in memory of their place of origin. Some of them must have been assigned to Zamboanga, possibly in 1718, if not later. They, too, have been indigenized and are now integrated into the majority population.

- The migrants, also known as settlers, and their descendants constitute the majority or approximately 70 percent of the population in Mindanao. They moved from Luzon and the Visayas in the 20th century. To reiterate, included in the count are the Chavacanos and the descendants of native inhabitants cited above who were converted to Christianity in the Spanish period, mostly from northern and eastern Mindanao.

- We cannot talk about conflict in Mindanao without touching on the issue of how the indigenous peoples

had been reduced to cultural minorities. The forces that were responsible for the marginalization of the minority peoples of the Philippines were the same forces that minoritized the Lumad and Moro communities of Mindanao. It was also the same force that made the majority what they are, the dominant majority. First, it was the Spaniards, then the Americans and, finally, by its adoption of the same policies and programs implemented by the colonizers, the government of the Republic of the Philippines. To fully appreciate the process, we need to at least quickly proceed from one regime to the next.

- Minoritization was a long process and to understand it in context, we shall examine how these three governments employed the three-fold elements of colonial practice: (a) official labeling, (b) creating the administrative structures within which these labels became operative terms of reference, and (c) the actual dispossession of the indigenous peoples of their traditional lands, not necessarily in that order.
- The main contribution of the Spaniards to the minoritization process was colonization, also known as Christianization -- though not necessarily Hispanization. It created a new identity among its colonial subjects and distinguished them from the others. To make a very long story short, let us do a quick leap forward and view the matter from hindsight at the end of the Spanish colonial regime.
- In 1898, at the collapse of the colonial regime, the entire population of the Philippine archipelago could be divided into two broad categories, those who were colonized and those who were not. Once belonging to independent small barangays, the conquered became the Christians. Indirectly they all acquired a new common identity, that of being subject to a centralized

colonial order. It was they who developed a common Filipino identity, and gave birth to the Filipino nation and the Republic of the Philippines.

- Those who were not conquered may be further subdivided into two groups. Those who fought back and were successful in maintaining their independence throughout the period of Spanish presence were the proud Moros of Mindanao and Sulu and the indigenous inhabitants of the Cordillera. The others, now popularly known as Indigenous Peoples, were those who kept out of Spanish reach, thereby remaining free.

- Where then is the Spanish contribution? This may have been unintended -- it was in creating the conditions for the various barangay communities to discover a common collective identity in being Christians and subjects of Spanish colonialism, and find a common cause in their struggles to eliminate the unjust colonial order. The result was the Filipino nation and the Republic of the Philippines in 1898. Their population was estimated to be nearly seven million, thus making them the majority population as a political aggrupation.

- The first labeling done to us by the Americans was to call the Philippine archipelago their Insular Possessions, acquired, they claimed, through the Treaty of Paris on 10 December 1898 whereby Spain ceded the entire Philippine Archipelago to the American government. Spain included in the cession those lands and people, like the Muslims and other indigenous groups, who were never colonized! This treaty legalized the first act of wholesale land grabbing.

- The next to be labeled were the people. We were neatly categorized into Christians and non-Christians, the latter made up of Moros and Wild Tribes. The word

“civilized” was used interchangeably with Christian, and “uncivilized” was used interchangeably with non-Christians.

- With the enactment of R.A. 1888 which also created the Commission on National Integration (CNI) in 1957, the Philippine government formally decreed that non-Christian Filipinos would be called the National Cultural Minorities." In an attempt to erase the social stigma that came with the name, the Constitutions of 1973 and 1987 introduced Cultural Communities and Indigenous Cultural Communities, respectively. These latter changes, however, did not remove Non-Christian from the Public Land Act which has continued to be in effect to this day.

- The first special administrative structures early in the American regime were the Mountain Province for the entire Cordillera; Mindoro; Palawan; Agusan consisting of the two Agusans at present and Bukidnon for the Lumad, and the Moro Province made up of the five provincial districts of Davao, Cotabato, Lanao, Zamboanga and Sulu. These structures were meant to be transition mechanisms for the eventual integration of the people into the mainstream of Philippine society and not as recognition of and respect for their uniqueness as indigenous communities. The same may be said of later structures which culminated in the Commission on National Integration.

- The more fatal aspect was that of legalized land dispossession, initiated and nurtured in colonial times, and sustained until the present. We now go to the discussion of the regalian doctrine and how it affects ancestral domain. The regalian doctrine is at the core of the Philippine land property system. It is not only contained in public land laws, it is in fact consistently enshrined in the Philippine Constitutions of 1935, 1973

and 1987. The doctrine says that the state is the sole owner of state domain and reserves the right to classify it for purposes of proper disposition to its citizens. Thus, lands classified as alienable and disposable may be owned privately, and titled to themselves, by individuals or corporations; and lands, forest areas, bodies of water, and so on which are described as inalienable and non-disposable are state owned and are not open to private ownership. They may, however, be leased for a specified period, usually 25 years, renewable for another 25 years.

- The Republic of the Philippines inherited the regalian doctrine from Spain, as it also adopted hook, line and sinker all laws affecting land and other natural resources enacted and implemented by the American colonizers. These constitute one of the biggest chunks of institutions carried over from colonial times.
- To the United States government, the Treaty of Paris and the subsequent treaty of 7 November 1900, effected a transfer of title of ownership, or of sovereign rights over the entirety of the Philippine archipelago. This fact explains why the Philippine Islands along with other Pacific Islands have been referred to in American textbooks as their Insular Possessions. This was unmistakably contained in the Philippine Bill of 1902, the organic law, which served as the fundamental law of the Philippine Islands until the enactment of the Jones Law of 1916.
- With the passage of the Land Registration Act No. 496 by the Philippine Commission on 6 November 1902, the American colonial government also institutionalized the Torrens system, adopted in the country from South Australia. This law provided for the guidelines for the registration and titling of privately owned lands,

whether by individual persons or by corporations.

- We must reiterate, for emphasis, that the US acquisition of sovereignty over the Philippine archipelago did not carry with it the recognition of the communal ancestral domains of the indigenous communities. We now proceed to the provisions of the laws themselves which are discriminatory.

- a. The Philippine Commission passed a law (Act No. 718) on 4 April 1903, six months after the passage of the land registration act, making void "land grants from Moro sultans or dattos or from chiefs of Non-Christian tribes when made without governmental authority or consent." It is interesting to note that later versions of the public land law continues to carry the almost exact wordings of said law, reiterating further the legitimacy of the transfer of sovereign authority from Spain to the United States, and the illegality of indigenous claims. This same provision is still in effect to this day (1998).

- b. The Land Registration Act No. 496 of 6 November 1902 requires the registration of lands occupied by private persons or corporations. There was no room for registration of communal lands.

- c. The Public Land Act No. 926 of 7 October 1903, passed by the Philippine Commission allowed individual homesteaders to acquire homesteads not exceeding 16 hectares each, and corporations 1,024 hectares each.

- d. Public Land Act No. 926, amended through Act No. 2874 by the Senate and the House of Representatives on 29 November 1919, provided that the 16 hectares allowed earlier to individuals was increased to 24, but the non-Christian was allowed an area not exceeding ten (10) hectares.

- e. Commonwealth Act No. 41, as amended on 7 November 1936, withdrew the privilege earlier granted to the settlers of owning more than one homestead at 24 hectares each and reverted to only one not exceeding 16 hectares. But the “non-Christians” who were earlier allowed a maximum of ten hectares were now permitted only four (4) hectares.

The resettlement of Mindanao was initiated by the American colonial government as early as 1912. It was sustained and intensified during the Commonwealth period, and picked up momentum in the post-World War II years.

The year 1913 saw the passage by the Philippine Commission of Act No. 2254 creating agricultural colonies aimed, officially, at enhancing the rice production effort already started in the Cotabato Valley. Specific sites selected were Pikit, Silik, Ginatilan, Paidu Pulangi and Pagalungan, the very heart of Magindanao dominion in the upper Cotabato Valley - the site of several recent armed skirmishes between the MILF and the armed forces, and Glan at the southernmost coast of the present South Cotabato province. In its supposed attempt to integrate the various sectors of the population, distinct population groups were purposely mixed in the colonial sites. In Colony No. 2, for example, composed of Manualana, Pamalian, Silik, Tapodok and Langayen, Cebuano settlers and Maguindanao natives lived together. Strangely, the settlers were allotted 16 hectares each while the Maguindanaons were given only eight hectares each. Altogether, six agricultural colonies were established in 1913, eight by 1921.

The formal resettlement programs spawned the spontaneous influx of migrants who came on their own. It is estimated that more people came this way than through organized channels.

To be able to appreciate how fast was the process of displacement among the indigenous groups, one can do a comparative study of the population balance in Mindanao over several census years. The history of population shift in Cotabato was reflected throughout Mindanao, revealing a pattern consistently unfavorable to the indigenous population. Total Islamized population was placed at 39.29 per cent in 1903; this was down to 20.17 percent in 1975.

Lumad population was 22.11 percent in 1903; it fell to 6.86 percent in 1975. Put the other way, what particular areas had Muslim majority? Or Lumad majority? By the census of 1980, the Muslims still had only five provinces and 13 towns in other provinces to their name. The Lumad had only seven towns.

Quantitatively, it was logging which should be credited with having penetrated the vast virgin territories of Mindanao for exploitation. It also opened the way for more settlers. Logging became widespread in the region in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Already as a result of resettlement, indigenous populations naturally receded from their habitat in the plains upward into the forest areas. Logging caught up with them there. In 1972-73 alone, there were 156 logging concessionaires, mostly corporate, in Mindanao, with a total concession area of 4,878,895.02 hectares, virtually leaving no room in the forest for the tribal peoples.

Pasture lands, covered also by 25-year leases, come as a poor second to logging with 296 lessees in 1972-73 for a total of 179,011.6 hectares. Conflict with ranchers was the main trigger in the Matigsalug rebellion. Similar stories of conflict have been reported in South Cotabato.

Lately, after the enactment of the Mining Act of 1995, the latest threat from big business in the perception of the Lumad population and those who sympathize with them have been the mining companies. As of this writing, at least six big foreign companies have pending applications for a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements (FTAA) with the government for large scale exploration, development and utilization of mineral resources in Mindanao. Their combined exploration area is 2,156,000 hectares. The actual mining site may just be three to five percent of this but the very thought that the company is authorized by government to conduct exploration activities even in private lands seems to be totally unacceptable.

Prior to the massive influx of settlers, the general observation is that the indigenous population of Mindanao were originally lowlanders. With the arrival of the settlers, the local inhabitants receded into the midland areas. With the coming of logging concessions in the early 60s and cattle ranches, they moved further up to the uplands. While trying to make do with what was left to them, a law came into existence in 1975, Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code providing, among others, that lands not covered by paper titles which

are over 18% in slope or less than 250 hectares are considered permanently public.

Nurtured through the legislative process by committed and well informed indigenous leaders-lobbyists and sympathetic legislators, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) deserves to be hailed as a strategic first in the history of Philippine legislation. This is the long awaited ancestral domain law that is designed to protect the interests of the indigenous peoples and uphold their identity and dignity.

At present the best legal instrument to help the Lumads is IPRA. Passed in 1997, IPRA is the first law in the 20th century that seeks to reverse or overturn PCA 718 of 1903, and also nullify the impact of PD 705 or the Revised Forestry Code. Not only do the IPs have the right to title their ancestral domains, they may also govern themselves within these territories accordance with their customary laws. Properly implemented, IPRA will ensure the full exercise of Lumad right to self-determination. (See Chapter IV on Right to Self-Governance and Empowerment).

Especially important for our discussion on conflict, the IPs have the right not to be drawn into bigger conflicts outside their communities. Sec. 22, Chapter V states: "Rights during Armed Conflict. - ICCs/IPs have the right to special protection and security in periods of armed conflict. The State shall observe international standards, in particular, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, for the protection of civilian populations in circumstances of emergency and armed conflict, and shall not recruit members of the ICCs/IPs against their will into the armed forces, and in particular, for use against other ICCs/IPs; nor recruit children of ICCs/IPs into the armed forces under any circumstance; nor force indigenous individuals to abandon their lands, territories and means of subsistence, or relocate them in special centers for military purposes under any discriminatory condition."

A study has shown that in 1900, our forest cover in the Philippines was still 70%; it was down to 60% in 1920, 40% in 1960, 34% in 1970, 23.7% in 1987, and 18.3 % in 1999. The period from 1960 to 1985 was crucial because this was the time when logging operations were at their peak (a logging concession is for 25 years, renewable for another 25 years). Although it was a major factor in the denudation of our commercial forest cover, it was not the

only one cause. Focusing on Mindanao, one can easily see that pasture leases and other commercial activities, settlers and their agricultural practices, even indigenous systems -- all combined to bring about the degradation of our forest cover.

In the last quarter of 1973, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) imposed an oil embargo on all countries assisting Israel. This included the Philippines. At that time, it became known that the Philippines was nearly 100% dependent on the two countries of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for its oil requirements. To prevent a similar incident from happening, President Ferdinand Marcos initiated a comprehensive energy development program, including oil exploration and the tapping of geothermal and hydro resources. As a result of this, the Agus and Pulangi hydroelectric power plants and the Mt. Apo geothermal projects were put into place. Combined with the Malampaya gas finds in Palawan sea, the government had succeeded in reducing foreign energy dependence by at least 46% (this has not erased the fact that as far as crude oil is concerned, we are still dependent on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for our needs).

In the process, however, the ancestral domain rights of the indigenous peoples have been violated. Well known examples of these are the Chico River conflict and the Mt. Apo controversy during the Marcos regime.

Reflections for the future

Developments in the first 75 years of the 20th century led to the rapid marginalization of the Lumad and other indigenous peoples of the country.

Events in the last twenty five years of the same century, however, represented a period of awakening. The Moro National Liberation Front led the Bangsamoro armed struggle for liberation, which shook the foundations of the Republic. Although the Muslims already have their Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and the Code of Muslim Personal laws has been made part of the legal system of the Philippines, the Muslims are far from satisfied. There is still the unfinished negotiation between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The Lumad communities, for their part, had launched their own struggle for self-determination or the assertion of their right to run their own lives in their respective areas of ancestral domains in accordance with their customary laws.

Looking back a little, it is important to bear in mind that the Lumad communities, ill-equipped to handle the impositions of government and the flood of settlers and big business, in many ways unwittingly facilitated their own marginalization. Although they had customary laws on how to handle trespassing by outsiders and other minor intrusions into their territory, what happened since the arrival of the Spaniards, and the Americans in the 20th century was an intrusion and trespassing which they could only view helplessly.

For many years they had to contend with laws and impositions which made it difficult for them to live in peace. Marginalization was not only a process of being outnumbered, it was also experiencing on a daily basis the rapid erosion of their own territory, their culture and identity before their very eyes. They have lost control of their own lives. Almost.

In a way, the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act represents one major effort on the part of the IPs to survive, to recover their lost dignity. Now that they have it, how do they get it implemented in the face of a majority culture that is not exactly sympathetic to IP values? Many people from among the majority population took up the cause of these minority groups. In Mindanao, the tri-people approach to peace and development was born, upholding equality of rights based on dignity, not on number.

Ancestral domain and reforestation

Given the situation where the remaining forest cover all over the country is down to 18.3%, and after our recent experiences with El Niño and La Niña, no self-respecting citizen would dare question the need to protect the remaining forest and to reforest. But then it must also be stressed that the same forest areas happen to be the same general territory where high concentration of indigenous populations are now also located. Must we include the indigenous communities as integral players in the reforestation or do we reforest in complete disregard of their presence? Or worse, do we keep them off

reforestation areas? This matter has not been thoroughly examined. Although the broad outline of government policy has been laid out in IPRA, it has yet to come up with a clear-cut set of policies that would govern reforestation activities and what to do with the indigenous inhabitants within the forest zones.

We must earnestly consider giving them a vital role in the restoration, regeneration and care of the forest. They must also be assured that they would benefit from the same forests, continue to nurture their culture as they have done since time immemorial, and adapt to external influences from within the safety of their ancestral domain and at their own pace. In short, regeneration of the forest should mean assurance of survival, not continuing marginalization as they have experienced and continue to experience until today.

Indigenous natural resource management

All Indigenous Peoples in the country have essentially the same approaches to natural resource management. They use only what they need. They consciously maintain the sustainability of the forest, the rivers and the sea from which they draw their sustenance. They live in a world of spirits, or diwata; they believe that spirits look after the integrity of the forests, the rivers and the seas. They have time tested methods that their indigenous way of preserving the forest and allowing the land and flora and fauna to be sustainable are very sound methods of resources management. This is probably the strongest part of surviving indigenous knowledge system and practice. This certainly can serve as the most strategic element in Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) programs.

But having been dependent on the resources of the forests for centuries is also their soft belly at this point in time. They have not acquired the expertise in large scale reforestation. But so is the rest of the country. What little reforestation experience we have is largely experimental and remains to be tested. Regeneration of our forest should really be a joint effort between the Indigenous people and concerned government agencies or non-government organizations. It is a good starting point that we have indigenous communities that possess the best motive to regenerate and care for the forest -- the forest

is their home, it is the home of their spirits, and their very survival is intimately interrelated with it.

Not so bright side to commercial tree farming

So far, the government has allowed commercial interest to dominate its reforestation activities, thus creating programs that open the way to commercial tree plantations. Examples of these are Timber Production Sharing Agreement (TPSA) which are gradually replacing Timber License Agreements, Industrial Forest Plantation Management Agreement (IFMA), the Industrial Tree Plantation Lease Agreement (ITPLA) and the Socialized Forest Management Agreement (SIFMA). But these tend to be destructive because secondary forest is often cut and replaced with mono-culture of commercial trees. These are not likely to restore the biological cycle of life that used to exist in the forest's old areas. Reforestation is probably a misnomer because it is solely focused on trees. No, it should also see the restoration of the biological cycle as a fundamental consideration. Flora and fauna are integral components of the complete biological cycle.

Reflection on the government justice system: a major element in the government mechanism to restore and maintain order in the community

With the aforementioned historical survey, I begin to wonder about the wisdom of the judicial system being implemented by government at present which is a transplant, largely from western legal institutions. It was meant to serve the purpose of restoring and maintaining order in the Philippine community. Yet, it was developed in an entirely different social milieu and is therefore alien to our diverse Philippine cultures. Little surprise that when a judge has done his work and has passed what he deems to be an appropriate judgment, the litigants go home still dissatisfied; one party is the winner and the other party the loser. For all practical purposes, they are still enemies. Or, at least, not friends. While lawyers have taken an oath to uphold the truth, their behavior throughout the judicial proceedings is partial to their respective clients. Their orientation is to win against the other. The chief concern of the indigenous system is to restore order and good relations in the community.

A lesson from the Teduray

In going through the book **Tiruray Justice** by Dr. Schlegel recently, I discovered gems of wisdom that we can all use today in developing new relationships among the tri-people of Mindanao. They possess a universal character which makes for easy comprehension. First, let me straighten something out. Admitting a mistake in his first book **Tiruray Justice**, Dr. Schlegel corrected himself in his latest book **Wisdom from A Rainforest**, published in 1999. He said unequivocally that the people call themselves **Teduray** and that is the way they should be called.

Some fundamental Teduray Values in their adat or customs:

- a. The cardinal rule of (Teduray) human relations is "do not make anyone angry at you." Their children are taught "not to antagonize anyone or there will be trouble." (p.21)*
- b. "Respect for others is the Teduray's most basic moral obligation." (p. 31)*
- c. "Respect for each individual's feelings is the overriding goal of the adat" or customs. (p. 32)*
- d. "There are three main things to respect: a person's belongings, his standing, and his feelings." (p. 35) Thus, if one takes another person's belonging without asking, he does not respect the person. He lowers the person's standing. He will surely be angry. (p. 36)*
- e. A man's standing represents his social position, including his "relative age and authority, his relative dignity and honor, his social esteem." A person's standing is his "good name" and "his right to it." (p. 37)*
- f. A person whose actions have caused a bad fedew (a bad gallbladder) is dufan. "By definition and by the whole logic of Teduray morality, dufan is serious and dangerous... certain to upset normal social relations, and it is very possible to incur violence, bloody turmoil for oneself and for society." (p. 43)*
- g. The kefeduwan is the legal and moral authority among the Teduray. It is his job to settle conflicts. He conducts his work in a tiyawan, the formal setting in which agreements are negotiated or disputes are resolved.(p. 58)*
- h. While kefeduwans represent their respective parties in a conflict, they do not behave like lawyers trying to win their respective cases. What kefeduwans*

do is to collectively reach the desired situation, the fiyo fedew, where "all faults are properly accepted and rights properly respected - which to the Teduray is justice because it restores a situation where all fedew are good." Incidentally, it is desirable for a kefeduwan to take part in a tiyawan where he is "equally related to both parties." (p. 61-62)

i. Teduray "moral behavior is aimed at the maintenance, preservation and restoration of good fedew; these tiyawan, once the moral status quo had been disturbed, had the same goals precisely." (p. 118)

Implications on biodiversity conservation

I would suggest most strongly that we view the universe as one unit (some people call this the integrity of creation). This way we do not separate environment from the human community and vice versa. The human person is an integral part of this natural environment.

The history of the Filipino people, or the tri-peoples of Mindanao is also the history of how we have managed our environment. Quire obviously, our ancestors regarded the land, the forest and the rivers and other natural resources as elements apart from themselves and were placed there to serve the survival needs of humans. Apparently we of the present generation still carry the same beliefs.

If, for instance, we view Mindanao and its peoples as one unit, then we can consider peace and development as closely interrelated. Eighty percent of the electricity requirement of Mindanao is served by the seven Agus River hydroelectric plants alone. Add to this the Pulangi IV production and that of Mt. Apo geothermal plant and the percentages rises dramatically. The occasional bombings of electrical towers that bring electricity from Agus to, say, Cotabato illustrates quite graphically that peace and development of Mindanao is closely intertwined with the resolution of the Bangsamoro struggle for self-determination. The increasing food requirement of the country can, allegedly according to experts, easily be met by Mindanao. Maybe so. But this must be premised on the restoration of the forest cover to a level that will ensure the sustainability of the water resources that flow into the lowlands. As it is, how many rivers have dried up because of the depletion of trees in forest lands? There is no need to stress that rice production, among others, is dependent on water flowing from the uplands.

Biodiversity conservation is, at this point in time, regenerating the original life cycle in once-forest areas that can still hold a forest. But this is most difficult where people cannot agree on

how to go about reforestation, where culture and the belief in spirits, say, among the Lumad, are not regarded as vital ingredients, or where belief in human capability is dominated by commercial considerations.

The tri-people concept is good but only up to a point. It is important for the purpose of establishing mutual acceptance and respect among these major segments of the Mindanao population as equal. But it must gradually grow into one common Mindanawon identity that everybody accepts and is proud of.