MAGANDANG UMAGA
KEN DAKAYO AMIN
Preservation and Promotion of the Cordillera Cultural Heritage and Addressing Prevailing Issues in Society

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4th International Conference of BIBAK in Europe
Dublin, Ireland
The Philippine Cordillera

- located in the north-central part of Luzon
- dubbed as “watershed cradle of North Luzon”
- has a mountainous topography with towering peaks, plateaus, valleys, winding rivers that contributed to the significantly unique lifestyle and culture of the people.
The 1987 Philippine Constitution finally recognized the clamor of the Cordillerans for autonomy which is expected to promote development.

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) was created by virtue of EO 220 issued by President Corazon C. Aquino on July 15, 1987.
.... however, the organic act that would have granted the region its autonomy was rejected twice by the people of the Cordillera in 1990 and in 1998... hence, CAR remains an administrative region instead of an AUTONOMOUS region...
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)
- Abra
- Benguet
- Ifugao
- Kalinga
- Apayao
- Mountain Province
- Baguio City
- 76 municipalities composed of 1172 barangays.
BAGUIO CITY

- regional center
- Summer Capital of the Philippines
NATURAL RESOURCES

- Gold and copper mines
- Climate suitable to upland vegetables, fruits and ornamental plants - cabbage, celery, carrot, potato, beans, lettuce, sweet peas, broccoli, beets, mushroom, banana, pineapple, strawberry citrus, persimmon, passion fruit, several varieties of cutflower, coffee, tobacco, mango, apple and pears
TOURIST DESTINATIONS

- Banaue Rice Terraces
- Maligcong Rice Terraces
- Sagada Caves
- Benguet Flower Gardens
- Handicraft industries
Cordilleran Festivals

- LANG-AY
- PANAGBENGA
- ARYA ABRA
- ULLALIM & PINIKPIKAN
- SINURSOR/SINANGDILA
- ADIVAY
- IMBAYAH or GOTAD
the identity of every province is captured in each provincial seal
The commonality of all provinces as reflected in the seals are the following:

1. Abundant God-given resources—symbolized by the mountains, valleys, hills, river systems, water falls, majestic terraces, green fields that carry with them the people’s resilience, steadfastness, and self-reliance in the face of adversity and challenge. Among the Igorots are their innate indigenous engineering skills, and agricultural potentials to develop tourism landmarks.
2. **Heavenly Bodies.** The stars and sun in emblems give impression of sun rays at day break heralding the dawning of a new era. The stars signify that the region is integral part of the Philippines contributing substantially to national development. The rising sun depicts the glories of the people’s past. The rays of the sun symbolizes the people’s indigenous knowledge as the light in attaining the people’s vision.
3. **Gong.** This instrument gives sound to convey unity, cohesion and solidarity towards the attainment of a singular and unified vision for development and industrialization. It also symbolizes the highland culture of the Cordillerans being optimistic in their outlook.
4. **Shield/ Spear and Head Ax.** These gadgets speak of the courage of the people, the traditional weapon for self-defense. These are all symbolic weapons of war, protection against ignorance, apathy and intolerance. They also symbolize the Igorots’ indomitable spirit of preserving their way of life, their environment, their customs and traditions.
5. **Symbolic shapes.** The triangular shape manifests stability and strength. The circles and wheels stand for the earnest vision of every province towards development and industrialization.
THE CORDILLERA HERITAGE

…should be preserved and promoted because it is the identity of the Cordillerans wherever they are…

1. Intangible heritage - songs, chants, dances, rituals, values, indigenous knowledge and technologies.
2. Tangible heritage - our different bamboo/ rattan crafts, our costumes, the engineering structures like the rice terraces, the farm implements and the rice granaries, as well as the man-made dams
Guidelines on chants, dances, costumes...

1. Among the Benguets, most gong-dances are to be performed by elders only and not to be performed by the teenagers or children since the music of the gongs are part of the ritual to appease or drive spirits. Gong-dances are played during wakes. Allowing the young children is a taboo since they do not understand the ritual. On the contrary, in Mountain Province, gong-dances are not only part of ritual but part of community celebrations like weddings, welcome parties, family reunions.
2. As a Cordillera cultural protocol, the specific ethnic culture should be respected in terms of the performance of chants and dances. The Bendian dance among the Benguets, victory or festival dances among other provinces may be learned, performed with the appropriate costumes for identity. There are commonalities and differences in steps and arm positions as well as specific costumes that should be properly followed.
3. If cultural presentation or performance is to satisfy viewers, the original ethnic dance should be differentiated from choreographed presentations. Originality of dances is hardly maintained since most cultural artists have the tendency to do choreography. In most choreographed Igorot dances, steps of Muslim dances are integrated. To some extent, costumes are misused.
4. To maintain originality, the proper use of costumes should be observed. The *tapis* among women is worn knee-level or below the knee. The g-string is worn with a knot worn without brief.
5. When rituals are to be presented for information purposes, it should be accompanied with literature and the actual butchering of animals on stage be stopped unless the ritual is performed for its actual specific purpose.
6. In order not to mislead viewers, it should be made clear if the dance is choreographed and has integrated several dance steps and costumes.
1. Rice wine or any other wine is always sipped to maintain friendly relationship with the living and the dead. It is to be offered freely as means to acknowledge the bountiful harvest from Kabunyan, the Almighty.
2. Gong-dances are always in circular arrangement as a sign of unity, solidarity and teamwork and with specific purposes.
3. Wisdom in elders is manifested in their indigenous knowledge of extemporaneous recital of prayers during rituals; narration of historical events, commitment in doing assigned tasks for the community’s welfare.
4. Dance-chants performed by both sexes during festivities or wakes are common among all ethnic tribes in Cordillera.
5. Rattan or bamboo wares and other farm implements were original among the Igorots as means to maximize their resources and for specific uses. While these antiques reveal the ingenuity and tells the life of Igorots in the past, it is getting lost due to lack of appreciation and advocacy. As a result, remnants of such ancestors’ legacy have gone to world museums for exhibits.
6. The indigenous knowledge of back strap weaving, tattooing, mummification, food preservation, stone engineering, rice farming, cooperatives, local governance is innate among the Igorots.
7. The spirituality of the Igorots in general is encompassed in their strong belief on the power of the Almighty referred as Kabunyan, Alawagan, Lumauig or sometimes termed as Adikaila, Nintotongdo or Manakaalin. With such belief, the core values of inayan, laton, may kasiyana, lawlawa baw etc. are their guiding philosophies in their everyday living.
Recommendations:
Towards the abatement of such societal issues, the following recommendations are posed:

1. Documentation of tangible and intangible heritage should be copyrighted as the Igorots’ intellectual property before they are pirated by other artists or authors.
2. There should be continuing advocacy and promotion of the Igorot culture through conferences, symposia and other forms.

3. There should be an aggressive continuing education among the youths on the dances, chants, indigenous technologies for them to understand their implication for development.
4. A Guidebook for tourists or travelers should be made as to the DONTs, and DOs when in the Cordillera.
THANK YOU
VERY MUCH