PHILIPPINE TRIBES AND TRADITIONS

by:
Donna May S. Baltazar
Teacher III, Orani National High School Parang - Parang

The Philippines is a very spread-out country surrounded by vast seas and oceans. There are over seven thousand islands that comprises the archipelago, and each island represents a different culture and traditions.

Most of the Philippine tradition today is influenced by Spanish colonialist that ruled the country for over three hundred years. But surprisingly there are still some native Filipino tribes that retained their pre-colonial culture even up to this day.

An example of which are the Igorot tribes of the North. The Igorot are a huge faction of tribes that resides in the Cordillera Mountain Region. They are known to land cultivators and farmers. The most famous association to the Igorots is the Banaue Rice Terraces which was built by an indigenous group that is part of the Igorot group, the Ifogaos. Even up to this day, the Igorots are still practicing their traditional dances and wear their cultural clothes. The Igorot tribe also encompasses the Ibaloi, Bontoc, Isneg, Kankanaey, Kalinga, and Tinguian groups.

Next are the Atis or also known as the Tumandok tribe, a Visayan tribe group that originates from the Panay Islands. They are known for their colorful and festive tribal attires. Although the culture and festival associated with Atis are heavily influence by Catholic acquisition, specifically the arrival of the Santo Niño. They still retain the pre-Spanish culture and beliefs.

The Badjaos of the Sulu islands are one of the most interesting tribes in the Philippines because unlike the other tribes which commonly resides in the Mountains,
the Badjaos are sea dwelling and live in floating houses. They are mostly fisherfolks and practice artisanal fishing methods. Badjaos are also known to be an Islamic tribe and practices Islamic traditions.

Another sea dwelling tribe, but mostly considered as island tribes are the Palawan tribes of the west. They are the indigenous tribes that resides the Palawan islands. They are also made up of smaller sub-groups of Batak, Palaweño, Palawano, and the Tagbanwa. They are known to be lowland dwelling and more adaptable to modern and rural living.

Considered as the largest tribe group when it comes to population are the Mangyan tribe of Mindoro. Although most of the populations are converted to Christianity when the Spanish invaded the archipelago, there are still hints of the pre-colonial culture and traditions that survived to this date.

Then there Lumad tribes comprise about thirteen cultural groups which are the Blaan, Bukidnon, Higaonon, Manday, Mamanwa, Mansaka, Manobo, Sangir, Subanen, Tagakaulo, Tagabawa, Tasaday, and T’boli. They are known as the non-Muslim indigenous group of Mindano, specifically from Davao. Like other groups they are famous for their tribal music that they create through handmade musical instruments.

Today the indigenous tribes of the Philippines are protected by the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997. But sadly, there are still issues and scandals regarding abuse and maltreatment of these people. Because of this, it is vital to teach students early on about the lives and culture of these ethnic people. They are the pillars of Philippine tradition. They are the original inhabitants of this country and thye deserve reverence and respect.
References:


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