

## PRIMITIVE KALINGA PEACE-TREATY SYSTEM

By R. F. Barton

Kalinga society has the same basis as all other native societies in the Philippines—the kinship group, which holds what may be called the executive or enforcing power and which defends the members of the group against torts and punishes them, and the territorial unit, which consists of the barrios situated in a single valley, with, sometimes, descendant barrios outside it. This territorial unit has no legislative or judicial power to speak of; in fact, these are absent from native Philippine societies, but it does possess mediating power. Public-spirited rich men, called *pangats*, advise peace whenever trouble arises and appoint a go-between or mediator to bring about a settlement between contending kinship groups. The go-between can give no orders or judgements, and the quarreling groups need not follow his advice, but there is one thing they must do—and that shows the germ of government in the modern sense, the germ of the idea of the state: they must keep the peace so long as the go-between has the case in mediation. If one or the other party resorts to the lance, the go-between kills the offender or one of his relatives.

This latter development is not a wholly distinctive thing in Kalinga society—there is the same institution in Ifugao, for example. But the elements in Kalinga society that are unique, so far as is known, are those of citizenship, peace-pacts, and the individuals who hold these peace-pacts in trust. I do not think these three elements have been found elsewhere in the Philippines, although the Kalinga peace-pact system appears to have spread to some extent into Abra, Bontok, Apayao, and Ifugao.

At Lubuagan, capital of Kalinga, there are over forty peace-pacts “held” by some twenty-five pact-holders, some of these individuals holding pacts with from two to five different regions.

The negotiation of a peace-pact begins with an exchange of spears. A man from the region suing for peace, let us call it region A, sends his spear to a prominent man of the other region, say B. The receiver of the spear in region B goes to the *pangats* and says, “Do you want me to keep this spear?” The matter is informally discussed and if it is decided that the

spear be kept and that the receiver shall be the pact-holder, this man sends back his own spear to region A, and a time of truce is ushered in during which head-hunting balances are struck between the kinship groups of the two regions; that is to say, if one family "owes" another family a life, it must pay in cattle and other forms of wergild a total that amount to as much as 2000 Pesos or more.

When these matters have been satisfactorily settled, the folk of region A come to region B and are there entertained and feasted for two days; this is called "drinking the pact." During the celebration the peace-pact is ratified. This, though not in written form, as the Kalingas have no form of writing, consists of eight articles, as follows:

1) Statement of the boundaries of each region. These must be defined, whether the regions are adjacent to or distant from one another, because they determine the region and the people for whom each of the two pact-holders (the man who originally sent the spear and the man who accepted it) are responsible.

2) Each pact-holder is responsible for the acts of the citizens of his region and for all acts within that region that affect citizens of his region and for all acts within that region that affect citizens of the other region.

3) Neither region will pollute the soil of the other with foreign blood; that is, each region will respect the neutrality of the other. Neither region will permit a third region to stain its soil with the blood of the other.

4) Each pact-holder guarantees visitors from the other region shelter and food.

5) In the event of illness of or accident to the citizens of one region occurring within the bounds of the other, the pact-holder there will provide for the return of such persons to their home region, providing carriers or attendants as the case may require. In the event of serious illness or death, the person will be returned wrapped in blankets.

6) Each pact-holder will assist traders from the other region in every possible way. If requested, the pact-holder will appoint reliable agents to execute commissions for the visiting trader.

7) Money stolen from or lost by a citizen of one region within the other region will be restored to him by a collection taken up from the citizens of the place where this occurred.\*

8) Pact holders will facilitate the collection of debts owed citizens of the other region by citizens of his own region, or seizures (*toliman*) made to cover such debts.

It is the duty of the pact-holders to punish any infraction of the peace by one of their co-citizens by slaying the offender or one of his relatives. He

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\* *Question*: But may a man not say that the lost money when he had none or claim that he lost more than he had? *Answer* (Pangat Kanao): A man wouldn't do that. If he did, it would be found out, and he would be punished very severely. But he wouldn't do it. *Comment*: A Kalinga has no private life; his life is an open book. He could not withstand the circumstantial investigation which the pact-holder of his own region (who would be notified) would make.

also collects wergild for the family of any man slain and for himself.

It is evident that the peace-pact negotiations began as a sort of brotherhood rite from the fact that the pact-holders are considered to be "brothers"; in fact, their children may not intermarry. The pact may formerly have been essentially only an agreement between two individuals that each would punish an offense against the other's family or village with the spear received from the other. Nowadays they do not actually use that particular spear, though they may if they wish.

There are certain prerequisites pertaining to the office of pact-holder: he shares in the indemnities he collects from his co-citizens for torts committed against people from the other region; he shares in the proceeds of sales made for citizens of the other region in his own region; and if he avenges the slaying or wounding of a citizen of the other region, he receives a gift called *lotok* from the kinship group of the person avenged. If he collects an indemnity (*baiyad*) from the other region for a violation of his own region's neutrality, he receives a share. Lubuagan has money in trust from such an indemnity, Pangat Dugyang being the "treasurer."

But the pact-holder's expenses of maintaining the dignity of his office considerably exceed his income from it. His recompense is principally the dignity and honor he enjoys. The pact-holders have a high sense of honor and are in every case superior men. The system they maintain works so efficiently that a man's life is safer in a foreign town than in his own. In a sense it is the pact-holder's kinship group that holds the pact, for this group supports and aids him, spying for him, and fighting for him, if necessary.

Pacts are inherited as if they were property. And it is an interesting fact that seven or eight of the Lubuagan pacts are held by women. One of Lubuagan's leading *pangat*, Kanao, is an original holder. This came about in the following way: Thirty years ago, an existing pact between Lubuagan and Ginaang was broken and no man wanted to hold the pact for either town because feeling ran very high. Yet the towns adjoined each other, and lack of a pact interfered with trading and the collection of debts and was a nuisance in many ways. Consequently, Gaiyampo said that if a certain Ginaang woman, her friend, would hold the pact in Ginaang, she would hold it for Lubuagan. It was so agreed, and since that time there has been no trouble between the two regions. Go to Gaiyampo's house and you will usually find it full of Ginaang people who have come to Lubuagan for the day. They highly regard and respect her.

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