

Institutional Work in Community Based Forestry Management: An Ethnography of Dialogue  
and Translation Performed in an Indigenous Peoples' Organization

by

Ricardo V. Munoz  
B.A., De La Salle University, 1985  
M.S., University of Portland, 2012

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written by Ricardo V. Munoz

has been approved for the Department of Communication

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Bryan C. Taylor, Chair

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Timothy R. Kuhn

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Matthew A. Koschmann

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Leah Sprain

---

Rachel Rinaldo

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

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## Abstract

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Institutional Work in Community Based Forestry Management: An Ethnography of Dialogue and Translation Performed in an Indigenous Peoples' Organization  
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Among forestry and development scholars and practitioners, threats to forest environments may be mitigated with the participation of indigenous people in Community Based Forest Management (CBFM). The paradigm of CBFM among practitioners and theorists is based on models of common resource management that depend on institutionalization, where communities formulate rules of resource management through communication. Critics of the post-positivist inclinations of CBFM have argued that discourse and humanistic approaches can provide a better understanding of effective CBFM. Neo-institutional theories had been proposed that provide such a humanistic understanding. Specifically, this dissertation proposes that organizational discourse analysis under a paradigm of communicative institutionalism can provide researchers with a deep understanding of the complexities of CBFM. Using theories that blend neo-institutionalism, postcolonial theory, and Montreal School theories within a Communication as Constitutive paradigm, it is theorized that processes of dialogue and translation are a form of institutional work, as transformative practices used by indigenous peoples' organizations (POs) in the construction, distribution, and delegitimation of texts. Texts here are theorized as having agency and that they constitute, along with other (human) agents, an institutional field. The author engaged in six months of ethnographic data gathering in the form of interviews, participant observation, and document collection. Through organizational discourse analysis of the data, it was found that (1) the institutional work of dialogue and

translation produces hybridized indigenous texts through modalities of sensemaking, legitimation, and intertextuality; (2) efforts to resolve discursive tensions among different discourses and texts present lead to the production of hybridized institutional texts; and (3) how through the authoring of hybridized institutional texts, intertextual relationships are reconstituted in ways that reconfigure the institutional field.

Keywords: Institutions, institutional work, neo-institutional theory, communication as constitutive of organizations, CCO, Montreal School, communicative institutionalism, organizational discourse, postcolonialism, community based forestry management, indigenous peoples, colonialism, Regalian Doctrine.

Dedication

For Jen

whose love, strength, and support made this work possible

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## Glossary

Barangay: The smallest political unit in the Philippine hierarchy of government

BFD: Bureau of Forestry Development

Camote: Sweet potato

CADT: Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title

CENRO: Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer

Centro (Barangay): The area within a barangay that contains its principal governmental buildings, especially the barangay hall

Datu: Traditionally, in Tagalog, the leader of a barangay or similar polity in pre-Colonial Philippines. The word has cognates in other Malay-based languages (e.g. Datuk in Modern Malay)

DENR: Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Ikalahan: Alternate name for the Kalanguya people. Literally, “from the broadleaf forest.”

Ilocano (or Ilokano): Native language of the Ilocano People of Northern Luzon, and adopted as the regional lingua franca of the Cagayan Valley and Cordillera provinces.

Imugan: a barangay in Santa Fe municipality where the KEF maintains its principal offices.

IPMR: Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative

IPRA: Indigenous Peoples Rights Act

Kalanguya: (1) An Austronesian language spoken by the community the KEF represents. (2) The name for the tribe of people who speak this language.

KEF: Kalahan Educational Foundation. The principal organizational site of this study.

MENRO: Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer

MOA: Memorandum of Agreement

Municipio (or Munisipyo): Municipal Hall. The area within a municipality that contains its principal governmental buildings.

NCIP: National Commission on Indigenous People.

PAFID: Philippine Association for Intercultural Development.

PO: Peoples Organization.

Purok: A neighborhood within a Barangay Centro.

Sitio: A settlement at a distance from the Barangay Centro.

Tagalog: The native language of people living in provinces adjacent Manila. Most Filipinos speak the language as a second or third language. The national language, Filipino, is based on Tagalog.

Tongtongan: (1) any public discussion where members of the public may participate. (2) A formal meeting of elders called for by an aggrieved party in order to decide on fault and impose a penalty.

## Chapter 1

## Indigenous Forestry Conservation and Postcolonial Approaches to Dialogue and Translation

*The forest landscape is social... It was only by walking and working with the Meratus Dayaks that I learned to see the forest differently. The forest they showed me was a terrain of personal biography and community history. Individuals and households tracked their histories in the forest: House posts resprouted into trees. Forest trees grew back from old swiddens. Fruits and rattans were planted into the growing forest. Forest giants were cleaned and claimed for their potential for attracting honeybees. People read the landscape for its social as well as its natural stories. Communities were constituted in these overlapping histories, as well as in shifting communal places, the old ones marked with enriched islands of trees . . . [However, by] the time I got back to the Meratus Mountains. . . something new had happened. . . Logging companies had moved in, bulldozing orchards, rattan plantings, and old community sites. The people I knew were angry and disturbed; a few years later they were resigned and depressed (Tsing, 2005, p. xi).*

Anthropologist Anna Tsing's account of the forest inhabited by the Dayaks in Borneo Island depicts a history experienced by many indigenous people, in many other places, with similar results. Beginning in the 1950s, throughout Southeast Asia, Africa, Central and South America, tropical forests became a rapidly depleted resource among the indigenous people for whom they were a home, and an integral part of their social relationships. As witnessed in the case of the Meratus Dayaks, the loss of forests represents more than a loss of mere material

resources; forests are also the foundation for many indigenous peoples' worlds and identities (Tsing, 2005).

But the destruction of tropical forests was not only a disaster for those indigenous peoples. The clear-cutting of forests by logging companies also created downstream ecological effects. As environmental scholar, Barbara Goldoftas (2006) describes in the case of the Philippines:

As loggers opened up new areas, landless migrants followed their roads into the forest and cleared land to farm, completing the deforestation. The forests' loss brought erosion, mudslides, flash floods, and drought. This ecological havoc further impoverished rural areas, helping deepen the economic decline (p. 24).

These cases illustrate how deforestation in the tropics results from a complex set of social forces, operating at the local level (Gibson, Mckean, & Ostrom, 2000). By the 1990s, global efforts at forest conservation had developed collaborations among international conservation organizations and donor agencies (a.k.a. *Big Conservation*), with local peoples organizations (POs) directly involved in promoting sustainability in the day-to-day lives of communities (a.k.a. *Little Conservation*) (Alcorn, 2005). Meanwhile, discourses used to advocate on behalf of indigenous peoples were increasingly incorporated into government policies, which in turn encouraged the *decentralization of forestry management*. These types of policy were subsequently labeled *Community Based Forestry Management (CBFM)*, *social forestry*, and *community forestry* (Charnley & Poe, 2007).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The term "community forestry" is also referred to as an alternative to "social forestry" (Fernandez-Gimenez, Ballard, & Sturtevant, 2008). CBFM and CBNRM are typically the preferred term in policy work among development scholars (see Leach, Mearns, & Scoones, 1999).

Nonetheless, these efforts to integrate local knowledge and international conservation goals have been marked by tensions occurring both within and between spheres (Li, 2007). For example, while official policy has called for decentralization from state control, such efforts have been conducted through existing state-regulated ownerships forms, many of which descend from colonial-era forms and understandings. One example here involves *certificates of ancestral domain title* (CADT) used in the Philippines (Lynch, 2005). Despite the intentions of government policy, the effect of using these forms has been to standardize -- thus partly ignore -- indigenous peoples' highly contextual and layered understandings of land-tenure, which are otherwise considered essential for sustainable forest-use (Gatmaytan, 2005). Similarly, development organizations must align their grounded knowledge of forestry practices, developed from working with local populations, with the requirements of international donors and oversight agencies, which often promote reductionist or essentialized understandings of terms such as "indigenous" or "sustainable" (Agrawal, 1995). In a final example, forestry scientists have had difficulties reconciling their western onto-epistemologies of forestry knowledge with indigenous understanding of the forest lifeworld (Agrawal, 1995; Banzon-Cabanilla, 2011).

The focus of this dissertation is on how Philippine-based POs manage "Little Conservation," a phrase that describes the day-to-day, communal forms of maintaining local biodiversity (Alcorn, 2005).<sup>2</sup> As POs struggle to develop successful solutions to their needs, based on local knowledge and organic institutions,<sup>3</sup> it is important to understand how this process is accomplished through communicative practices. I will argue that this understanding

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<sup>2</sup> Alcorn (2000) defines "conservation" as "efforts to promote biodiversity."

<sup>3</sup> The term "institution" has various meanings, but here refers to "a significant practice, relationship, or organization in a society or culture" (Merriam-Webster). This understanding is reasonably consistent among both developmental scholars in the Ostrom tradition, as well as neoinstitutionalism in the sociological tradition. Conceptual and theoretical issues surrounding institutions will be covered in Chapter 2.



has important implications for multiple research traditions, including the use of institutional theory in development studies, the sociology of institutions, and organizational communication. The general question that guides this work is “*How do forest-using indigenous people communicatively perform institutional work, while negotiating tensions associated with the development of forest-related knowledge and policy?*” As I will develop here, these tensions arise from the influence of competing concepts held by stakeholders concerning what constitutes “communities” and “property” concerning decentralized forest management (Hirtz, 2003). Much local PO work thus involves what Lawrence & Suddaby (2006) call *institutional work*: “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (p. 215; see also Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009; 2011). Indigenous POs caught in these tensions must actively and reflexively engage in the institutional work of developing local practices to create implementable set of actions, subsequently recognized by key stakeholders as “sustainable forestry management.”

From a postcolonial perspective, understanding how POs do institutional work is not only about sustainability, but must also consider issues of social justice for indigenous groups. These issues necessarily include the *decolonizing of institutionalized knowledge* (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2013), a process that makes salient the indigenous perspective in the organizing of forestry management. This effort towards decolonization, I argue, may be accomplished through the distinct communicative processes of *dialogue* (Dutta, 2011) and *translation* (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2013) – each of which is currently used by indigenous POs to promote both understanding and voice for indigenous groups in the formation of forestry policy. In these “spaces in between,” translation involves a struggle over meaning, conducted at the intersection of discourses of colonizer and colonized (Bhabha, 1994). These liminal spaces are locations

where, potentially, dialogue can effectively give greater agency to subaltern voices (Dutta, 2011). Dialogue and translation are thus intentional, mutually constitutive projects of NGO work in advocating for indigenous groups and sustainable forestry.

The organization of this dissertation will be as follows. In this chapter, I discuss discursive tensions that POs face in the development and implementation of forest conservation policy. I describe these tensions using a postcolonial perspective, emphasizing the ethics and politics of land rights, globalization and development work, as well as Westernizing attitudes in the construction of knowledge. In this chapter, the focus is on how such knowledge has diminished the importance of native ontologies and epistemologies. I will then associate this postcolonial understanding with the related communication lenses of dialogue and translation (Dutta, 2011; Broadfoot & Munshi, 2014). I focus on how these lenses depict PO's efforts to reconcile official and local onto-epistemologies in the course of their development work (Sillitoe, 2007).

In chapter 2, I problematize *institutions* as organizationally-related phenomena by taking a *communicative institutionalist* approach (Cornelissen, et al., 2015). Specifically, I will develop an *organizational discourse* perspective (Grant, et al. 2004) for understanding how institutions are the *products of texts* (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004). Using that analytical framework, I will argue that institutional work done by POs can be re-examined through a postcolonial understanding of institutional work through concepts of dialogue and translation.

In Chapter 3, I describe the site of study through six months of ethnographic work that I conducted with the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF), a local-level indigenous PO with a long history of forestry conservation work among the Kalanguya speaking people in the

Caraballo Mountains of Northern Luzon in the Philippines. I describe the epistemological need for an interpretive approach through which the data gathering and analysis would proceed.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I explore various discursive tensions made apparent in dialogic events and describe the institutional work of the KEF in maintaining their forest habitat and indigenous identity. These tensions, sourced in the intertextual relationships within discourses of agroforestry, indigeneity, land tenure, and governance, will be explored from the perspective of the KEF and how members of that organization engage in the translational and dialogic actions as institutional work.

In Chapter 6, I summarize my findings, discuss contributions to literature, limitations, and pose a brief reflection on my role in the scene.

I begin in the next section with a brief history of community forestry as text of resistance to colonially-sourced understandings of forestry management.

### **Community Based Forestry Management as an Alternative to Colonial Centralization**

*Community Based Natural Resource Management* (hereafter CBNRM) is a conservation paradigm that has become widely adopted among nation-states and international conservation organizations as a partial solution to various ecological threats posed to resources ranging from fisheries to forests (Tsing, Brosius, & Zerner, 2005). This paradigm is based on the premise that local communities are more cognizant of the particular ecological processes of the territories they inhabit, and are thus in a better position to maintain and manage resources sustainably (Leach, Mearns & Scoones, 1999). Specifically, in the case of tropical forests in the Philippines, *community based forestry management* (hereafter CBFM) has developed as a solution to the rapid deforestation that occurred in the period beginning in the mid-1940's, and extending into the 1970s (Pulhin & Pulhin, 2003). While most people involved in sustainable development

presume that forests must be preserved in order to maintain a sustainable environment, using community knowledge to accomplish sustainable forestry practices has been hampered by the legacies of colonial history (Lynch, 2005). In this section, I detail the evolution of CBFM as an attempt to correct the errors and injustices of a colonial past, and how communal efforts to redefine forestry management continue to be problematic due to existing laws and understanding of the role of the state in property ownership.

### **The History of Philippine Colonization and the Regalian Doctrine**

CBFM developed as a reaction to existing policy that was a legacy of previous colonial regimes. As cited in Philippine legal jurisprudence, it was the imposition of the Regalian Doctrine by Spanish colonial authorities that justified the imperialist appropriation of all public lands then held by indigenous people. In the Philippines, this legacy has continued to legitimate state control of public lands after the founding of the Philippine Republic. Legal scholar Owen Lynch (2005) describes the Regalian Doctrine as “the original sin of Philippine law and jurisprudence” (p. 396):

According to the doctrine, at some unspecified moment during March 1521, ostensibly after the soon-to-be-killed Ferdinand Magellan “discovered” the archipelago and planted a cross...the sovereign rights of the Philippine people’s forebears were unilaterally usurped by, and simultaneously vested in the Crowns of Castile and Aragon. At the exact same time, every native in the politically undefined and still largely unexplored (not to mention unconquered) archipelago ostensibly became a squatter, bereft of any legal rights to the land or other natural resources (p. 396).

The practical effect of adopting the Regalian doctrine was that the Spanish claim over control of the archipelago in the 16th Century eventually became the territorial basis for that nation-state known today as The Republic of the Philippines. The imperial bureaucracy of New Spain, whose territory included all Spanish claims over the Americas and the Philippines (Bjork, 1998)<sup>4</sup> retained the right to control all public land, including the rights to water and all other resources not privately owned (Tuminez, 2007). Despite these claims and the various laws that attempted to enforce them, most parts of the archipelago were never effectively controlled by Spanish colonial authorities, and the inhabitation of forests by indigenous people (i.e. those who managed to avoid colonization) remained relatively undisturbed (Pulhin, 2002). It was only with the coerced acquisition of the Philippines from Spain by the United States in 1899, along with the biases towards development brought by American corporate managers, that an extensive effort was made to control and exploit local forest resources. Indigenous populations whose land had previously fallen under ancestral and communal land-use were effectively disenfranchised, and the exploitation of lumber and other forest resources thus became possible (Tuminez, 2007; Pulhin, 2002; Goldoftas, 2006).

However, the American colonial regime's control over forest lands was not without its own set of discursive tensions. The advent of American colonialism in the Philippines coincided with the beginnings of the American conservation movement, and concepts of forestry management began to take on a western scientific basis (Goldoftas, 2006). Debates over whether, and to what extent, forests needed to be managed or conserved led to the creation of U.S. Forest Service in 1905, whose regulatory authority included control over Philippine forests, and which

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<sup>4</sup> The Philippines were only nominally a colony of Spain and was administered under the Viceroyalty of New Spain, primarily through Mexico, between 1571 to 1815. It was only after Mexico's claim of independence during the revolution of 1810 that Spain administered the archipelago directly. Thus, policy formation in the Philippines closely adhered to colonial imperatives originating in Mexico for much of the period (Bjork, 1998).

formed the basis for Philippine forestry administration through to the late 20th Century (Goldoftas, 2006). However, the process of deforestation had already begun; foreign companies demanded lumber products, logging companies introduced industrialized methods of timber production, and the retreat of Philippine forest land was initiated (Pulhin, 2002). Even under US control, however, local protests concerning the harms of exploitation and conservation of forests succeeded at limiting much of the destruction (Goldoftas, 2006).

### **The Neocolonial Destruction of Forests and the Rethinking of Policy**

The post-World War II transfer of forest control to newly formed postcolonial nation-states in Southeast Asia proved to be disastrous for many tropical forests. In the case of the Philippines, the newly formed Republic of 1946 inherited the Regalian doctrine, along with a predominantly favorable attitude towards the commercial exploitation of forests. Influenced by neocolonial concepts to develop the Philippine economy through industrialization, the serious clear-cutting of forests for export began in earnest. In the period between 1950 and 1970, Philippine forests contributed nearly half the tropical timber exported from Southeast Asia, and this flow peaked in the 1970s. By the 1980s, less than 20 percent of the archipelago remained forest-covered (Goldoftas, 2006).

By the 1980s, it had become clear that centralized forest management among former colonial regimes had been a conservation failure, and that the needs of both forestry conservation and social justice could be combined. A World Bank report issued in 1991 acknowledged that locally-contextualized indigenous knowledge offered lessons for development practitioners that could mitigate harms (Agrawal, 1995). International conservation organizations, such as the World Wildlife Fund, subsequently began to incorporate community-based initiatives into their programs (Alcorn, 2005). Despite the limitations of being volunteer-based organizations, locally

based NGOs working in participatory development came to be seen by international conservation organizations as a viable agent serving the devolution of foresting authority from national governments to local communities (Clarke, 1995). Alliances between international conservation and indigenous advocacy organizations became an important component in the decentralization of postcolonial governance (Jordan & Tuijl, 2000). As Tsing, Brosius, and Zerner (2005) describe in their review of this trend in the 1990s, “[Organizations] and their allies have sought to bring about a fundamental rethinking of how the goals of conservation and effective resource management can be linked to a search for social justice for historically marginalized people” (p. 2). As a result, community-based initiatives were formulated by various government authorities that involved the participation of local communities.

However, the association between governments, international conservation agencies, and local communities have brought about tensions that became evident in their discourse. In the next section, I explore those tensions further.

### **Tensions in Forest Management and Advocacy**

Some of the difficulties governments face in implementing nationalized CBFM derive from tensions inherent to the knowledge discourses of local and centralized agencies.<sup>5</sup> In terms of organizational discourse, *tensions* involve a feeling state, experienced by organizational actors, characterized by “stress, anxiety, discomfort, or tightness in making choices and moving forward in organizational situations” (Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016, p. 68). The manifestation of discursive tensions in policy implementation is one type of exigency leading governments to rationalize action. As a means of approaching the central concerns of this study, I turn now to characterize tensions that are most influential in this setting.

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<sup>5</sup> I will explicate the posthumanist, agentic qualities of discourse in Chapter 2.

The literature on the implementation of forestry policy suggests that three types of tension are salient in their implementation. First, despite the decentralization policies that CBFM recommends, implementation problems faced by POs are still traceable to the Regalian Doctrine. The primary effect here is that the state continues to exert considerable control over legal ownership and management of forest lands as property (Lynch, 2005; Gatmaytan, 2005). Secondly, despite being rooted in a participatory relationship with their communities, local government offices feel pressure to conform to depoliticizing world-views dominant among international grant funding agencies and national governments (Hilhorst, 2001). Finally, practitioners have realized that indigenous knowledge has either been discounted or rendered into a language of “modern” science that has inhibited successful implementation (Agrawal, 1995). I proceed now to elaborate each of these tensions.

### **Tensions between Indigenous and “Modern” Concepts of Land Tenure**

The first of these three tensions is best illustrated through a recent account of a community-rights practitioner attempting to acquire a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) on behalf of an indigenous group, the Manobo of Mindanao Island in the Philippines:

Shortly after submitting the documents we met with the *datus* (leaders) of the community to discuss follow-up activities. When I asked what steps needed to be taken, the eldest *datu* declared that a ritual must be held. I somewhat blithely assumed that this was a thanksgiving ritual, until it emerged that he was speaking of a *pang-hugas*, a cleansing ritual. When I asked him why we needed a cleansing ritual, he replied that we had committed a *sala* (sin). Nervous now, I asked him what sin we had committed. He said that in the papers we had submitted . . . we had stated a lie. . . I asked him what lie we had stated in the application. The *datu*



answered that it was a lie that they, the Manobo, owned the land . . . that *Magbabaya*, the Manobo Creator, was the owner of the land. . . In due course, the ritual was held, and we paid a fine of a large pig and an *agong* (brass gong) (Gatmaytan, 2005, pp. 459-460).

This example illustrates how Western, legalistic concepts of property, universalize ownership by creating absolute and simplified categories (i.e. associated with secular, liberal conceptions of legitimate agents). Developed and enforced by state authorities, these concepts inevitably conflict with the more complex, layered, and highly contextual concepts of land tenure developed among indigenous groups (Tsing, 2005). Among indigenous people, land use is broadly based on communal property concepts that are tightly coupled with the political, social, and material “landscapes” of the forest (Pulhin & Pulhin, 2003). Social organizations among indigenous groups in the Philippines vary from small, isolated hunter-gatherer bands to relatively complex, socially-stratified groups of settlements capable of institutionalized warfare, and controlled by warrior chiefs or heads of prominent families (Jocano, 1998). Even among those larger polities controlled by *datus*, the division of property was based on the community needs of rotating *swiddens*,<sup>6</sup> and the small-scale harvesting of agroforestry products for trade. Importantly, conventional divisions between human and natural phenomena do not exist in this ontology. Forests are not wildlands where no people reside; instead, people and forests are an integrated environment that is “groomed” according to the basic needs of its inhabitants (Wiersum, 1996; Baker & Kusel, 1993; Tsing, 2005). Indigenous narratives also invoke powerful

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<sup>6</sup> The term “swidden” or “shifting agriculture” refers to the practice of slash and burn cultivation where a plot of forest land is burned and planted to rice and other crops for a few years. Once soil nutrients have been depleted, cultivation is moved to another plot while the original plot lays fallow, typically for a decade or more (Shifting Agriculture, Britannica.com). Noting Tsing’s (2005) account in the introduction to this chapter, even fallow land remains productive as useful weeds and trees are encouraged to grow while unusable vegetation is removed.

normative and supernatural authority. For example, among the T'boli in the Southern Philippines, the *datu* (local leader) plays an authoritative role in determining the inherited rights to cultivation of swiddens along ancestral lines. The *datu* also represents the communal spirit of the people as they are “endowed with the attributes of *s'basa*. . . the general T'boli term for all forms of reciprocal sharing. . . which permeates the group's economic and sociocultural structure” (Duhaylongsod, 2011, p. 228).

These local understandings lead to this tension in reconciling the discourse of state ownership of forests with indigenous property rights. Land use policy typically involves the management of agricultural plots that are constantly shifting with resources managed through complex social arrangements (Dove, 1983). Since there are no sharp geographic divisions practiced among indigenous people in how they regard forest lands, concepts surrounding what constitutes “indigenous ancestral claims” can be complex and tangled. As Lynch (2005) explains, Western discourses of property rights have difficulty accounting for highly localized concepts which do not correspond to the neatly-bounded concepts of “property”:

Western property concepts are based largely on state-created and protected private individual rights or on ambiguous socialist concepts that theoretically vest the state with ownership of all land. . . [B]y contrast . . . community based property rights (CBPR). . . typically encompass a complex bundle of rights that are understood and respected by a self-defined group of local people. . . CBPR *often include but are not limited to common property*. They can also encompass various kinds of individual rights and kinship rights, such as inherited rights to agricultural fields and fallow, gardens, and planted or tended trees or rattan clusters. CBPR likewise can include rights to land, wildlife, water, forest

products, fish, marine products, intellectual property, and so forth. CBPR may vary in time and place to include rights to seasonally available resources such as fruit, game, fish, water, or grazing areas. They often specify under what circumstances and to what extent certain resources are available to individuals and communities to inhabit, harvest, inherit, hunt, and gather from (p. 413, emphasis in original).

This tension exists primarily because the Regalian doctrine has become naturalized among Westernized people. In this tradition, “communities” are incorporated in terms of a state’s granting of a license, as opposed to forming organically through a network of human/material relationships. In her groundbreaking work on how locals manage “common-pool resources” apart from state or market mechanisms,<sup>7</sup> political economist Elinor Ostrom (2015) cites a relevant passage from C. W. Clark’s study on common resources:

a diversity of rights may be established giving individual rights to use particular types of equipment, to use the resource systems at a particular time and place, or to withdraw a particular quantity of resource units (if they can be defined). But even when particular rights are unitized, quantified, and salable, the resource *system* is still to be owned in common rather than individually (Ostrom, 2015, p. 13, citing Clark, 1980, p. 117).

Most visibly, conventional state resolution of these tensions make possible a politics based on the exploitation of forest resources by private firms (logging and mining companies), which are used to dealing with local governments to enforce their claims without regard for local

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<sup>7</sup> Common pool resources are usually those that cannot effectively be divided or allocated because they are non-stationary, which primarily include resources such as fisheries and water. This definition would include resources that are particularly subject to degradation through mismanagement, such as grazing lands and forests (Ostrom, 2015).

institutions of ownership. As Gatmaytan (2005) explains: “Weak as these regulations were, there was the expected opposition from logging and other companies worried about their access to local resources and from local government units threatened by loss of jurisdiction or control of territory” (p. 465). Often, applications for ancestral land registrations are held up in courts used to understanding rights to resources in terms of state-issued licenses. This results in even strongly documented claims being typically delayed as logging companies continue operations (Gatmaytan, 2005). Lynch (2005) suggests that accommodating the heterogeneity of local property forms is precisely what decentralization is supposed to accomplish, and that the “grant of legal rights by the state” should be distinguished from the “recognition of CBPR” (p. 419). Nonetheless, the effects of a local policies that depend on the state for their authority are particularly difficult for NGOs to overcome.

### **Tensions in Translation: The terms “Indigenous” and “Development”**

Our second tension becomes apparent in considering issues involving the role of government in relation to indigenous rights. This tension arises from the construction and usage of terms such as “indigenous” and “development.” Specifically, in the Philippine Constitution of 1987 encodes the principle that “The state recognizes and promotes the rights of *indigenous cultural communities* within the framework of *national unity and development*” (Art. II, Sec. 22, emphasis mine). This constitutional provision resulted in the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), which decentralizes governance among indigenous communities (Hirtz, 2003). The result was that indigenous POs were given official power to act as a kind of discursive broker moving between the national and indigenous concepts surrounding property and forestry management.

However, as Hirtz (2003) explains, national development goals and missions are based on an understanding of rights rooted in Western notions of development, which do not fit neatly into the traditional forms of authority that indigenous communities had developed historically, and that contradict other laws:

All the laws have to contend with the constitutional mandate that “(t)he congress may provide for the applicability of customary laws governing property rights or relations determining the ownership and the extent of ancestral domain”. Furthermore, the relationship with other laws regulating environmental and natural resources, or laws pertaining to issues of governance, can lead to contradictory interpretations which require the involvement of the legal system to settle (pp. 902-903).

In many ways, this tension is as much rooted in the meaning of the word “development” that emerged alongside the creation of global developmental organizations, such as the IMF, World Bank, and the UN. As anthropologist Arturo Escobar (1995) suggests, the term “development” may be treated as a historically produced discourse of a globalized, postcolonial world — rather than as a set of economic programs — that constructs subjects as either developed or underdeveloped. By invoking Foucault’s (1977) concept of the subject as a product of discourse, he proposes that *development* is a “technology” that depicts the former subjects of colonialism as in need of “modernization” in Western-styles.

### **Tensions between Concepts of Indigenous Knowledge**

Our third tension involves the differences between “modern” and “indigenous” epistemologies. As Sillitoe (2007) explains, there has been a long tradition among post-colonial anthropologists of presenting indigenous forms of knowledge as if they were of equal importance

to Western concepts of science.<sup>8</sup> This tension is sourced in what Chakrabarty (1992) describes as the double-bind of subaltern history. In terms of his native India, he notes that

[O]n the one hand, [the subject of Indian history] is both the subject and object of modernity, because it stands for an assumed unity called the “Indian people” that is always split into two—a modernizing elite and a yet-to-be-modernized peasantry. As such a split subject, however, it speaks within a metanarrative that celebrates the nation-state; and of this metanarrative the theoretical subject can only be a hyperreal “Europe,” a “Europe” constructed by the tales that both imperialism and nationalism have told the colonized (p. 18).

Chakrabarty’s metanarrative of “Europe” here invokes a mythologized version of the modern nation-state that was useful for the colonizer. Arguably, this metanarrative constructs a false-consciousness (in Marxian terms) which reproduces the colonial state as a hegemonic structure. What Chakrabarty calls for is decoding of the term “modern” as “European,” and in so doing to *provincialize Europe*, that is, to render Europe as no more important a sphere of intellect as any other.

The related tension for this study subsequently arises from the question of what knowledge can be understood as “indigenous,” which some anthropologists note is a catch-all phrase that casts traditional knowledge in terms of Western concepts (Dove, 2006). As Agrawal (1995) explains, this is a false view of what indigenous knowledge means in terms of development practice:

A classification of knowledge into indigenous and Western [categories] is bound to fail not just because of the heterogeneity between the elements—the

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<sup>8</sup> More recent anthropology has embraced a post-humanist sensibility that derive their ideas from Actor Network Theory (Bessire and Bond, 2014).

knowledges filling the boxes marked indigenous or western. It also founders at another, possibly more fundamental level. It seeks to separate and fix in time and space. . . systems that can never be thus separated or fixed. Such an attempt at separation requires the two forms of knowledge to have totally divorced historical sequences of change—a condition which the evidence simply does not bear out (pp. 421-422).

As Banzon-Cabanilla (2011) explains further, the false dichotomy between formal “science” and indigenous “tradition” is rooted in a positivist assumption that science emerges from a single, scientific public. She therefore holds that “interpretive/hermeneutic and transformational epistemologies deserve more serious consideration, especially in the case of indigenous systems” (p. 31). Or as Duhaylongsod (2011) notes, “the term indigenous is vulnerable to a certain romanticism if not reification. . . the common portrayal of indigenous peoples as bearers of special knowledge of resource management can present them in a static, somewhat naively conflated category devoid of voice and agency” (p. 216).

Local knowledge is also the product of locally embedded power relations, which apart from preventing resource degradation also collaborates with state initiated power relationships. A good example here comes from Cleaver’s (2002) description of management of common grazing lands in the Usungu Basin of Tanzania. Specifically, Cleaver notes how groups establishing a *Sungusungu* (cattle militia), although this process derived from traditional systems of enforcing order in communal cattle lands through consensus, either replaced or collaborated with state-recognized official Village Defense Committees: “This unofficial militia is considered by members to be formally accountable to (modern) village government, while the practices of its operation are largely based on socially embedded principles of reconciliation and conflict

minimisation” (p. 24). What Cleaver suggests is that institutional knowledge of local resource management can thus be likened to a *bricolage*:

I suggest that it is a false dichotomy to pose a realm of “traditional” informal, culturally and socially embedded institutions against a “modern” domain of rationally designed committees and formal structures, and to suggest that one is likely to be better than the other at resolving conflicts or managing natural resource use. Local resource management arrangements are a complex blend of formal and informal, traditional and modern (p. 16).

What Cleaver suggests, then, is that local knowledge is never wholly either Western or indigenous. Rather, indigenous groups are fully aware of the political structures imposing alternative practices on their lifestyles, and are capable of a resilient accommodation of foreign-sourced knowledge as a part of their self-determination. That is, indigenous knowledge forms a part of a range of practices that can be adapted strategically to a colonizer’s political structures, and capable of making vulnerable the assumptive colonial hegemony over knowledge.

### **Decolonizing Dialogue and Translation**

In their chapter in the most recent (2013) edition of the *Organizational Communication Handbook*, Broadfoot and Munshi (2013) call for organizational communication scholars to *decolonize systems of knowledge*. Here, I take this call seriously by focusing on the communicative means of dialogue and translation to understand how PO work may expand the agency of indigenous peoples and their knowledge towards self-determination. Dialogue and translation are tightly coupled phenomena for POs engaged in mediating between their goals of social good, and the existing power relationships of postcolonial societies. These phenomena are tightly-coupled because (1) they are together involved in the (re)production of meaning, and (2)



they take place simultaneously through communication whenever groups are able to accomplish intertextuality in their expression. Later in this section, I will consider dialogue and translation separately, but first, it is important for our purposes to understand that these are co-present phenomena, imbued with *intentionality* in the process of social change.

Here, I briefly introduce concepts drawing from the work of the early twentieth-century Russian literary theorist and critic Mikhail Bakhtin to develop an understanding of dialogue and translation as modes of meaning construction. Directly stated, and as developed in Bakhtin's *oeuvre*, dialogue and translation are not discrete, solitary cognitive processes. Instead, they occur simultaneously as a discursively mediated process of meaning exchange and construction. Citing Bakhtin's dialogic perspective, De Michiel (1999) explains that textual translation is both intertextual as well as dialogic,

A translation text is a place where a dialogue takes place: between texts and practices, between empirical practice and theoretical practice, between science and ideology. It is a dialogic place, for at least two different logics meet in it: those of two different languages (cf. Torop, 2002, p. 58).

In this study, following Dutta (2011), I use the term "dialogue" as an exchange of felt, lived meaning developed by speakers in specific episodes where contradictory meanings of texts are negotiated. Dialogue subsequently embeds the "indigenous" subject in discourses of colonialism and modernity, whose texts produce a specific subaltern positionality that becomes an object of translation. I develop this argument further below, considering in turn both "dialogue" and "translation."

## **Dialogue and the Function of Texts**

A postcolonial perspective on dialogue emphasizes particular kinds of power differences between groups. I am especially interested in cases where indigenous and Western groups need to coordinate the knowledge and politics of sustainability. I begin with an explication of how texts come to function within genres of dialogue drawing from postmodern readings of Bakhtinian concepts.

In this view, dialogue is different from other modes of communication, in that it occurs in moments when interlocutors become profoundly aware of each other's difference, thus, creating possibilities of mutual transformation (Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004). Dialogue is also always a political event that reveals this difference. As Anderson and Cissna (2008) suggest, conceptualizing dialogue within contexts of "cultural-political difference" is also to "rethink conventional wisdom about imagining dialogue as an antidote to social and cultural problems" (p. 3). Smith (2008) explains dialogue in terms of Bakhtin's theorization of monologic communication as a tool of asymmetrical power. As a result, the dialogic may be appropriated as a mode of resistance:

The Bakhtinian conception of the dialogic. . . emphasizes the struggle that must sometimes be engaged to find idioms to express injustices. Experimental forms, including the carnivalesque, mark this struggle. Bakhtin refers to monologisms as attempts to silence and control subjects, and he valorizes dialogism as a way to counter this imposition through a heteroglossia that includes the preservation of local languages, folk tales, allegories, carnivals, ruses, and the like (p. 161).

In Smith's explanation, dialogue is conceptualized as not so much an antidote, but rather offers possibilities towards accomplishing social justice by construction and expression of multitude of voices (heteroglossia) through alternative genres of dialogic expression.

Similarly, Dutta (2011) privileges *voice*, and encourages dialogic spaces and genres through which the *subaltern voice* is able to gain salience. Dialogue becomes a means through which the erasures of colonized peoples' own historical accounts and systems of knowledge can be revived:

The very voices that have been systematically pathologized, scripted, and erased from the ontological and epistemological bases of knowledge production and praxis return from the discursive spaces of global politics through dialogue with the academic and the practitioner situated at the center of power. The politics of a dialogic approach to social change lies in the articulation of issues from subaltern standpoints, thus shifting the landscape of problem configuration and the development of solutions into the realm of subaltern agency (Dutta, 2011, p. 169).

In this case, "practitioner" means any development agent acting on behalf of particular colonized people, thus standing in the position of mediator to facilitate dialogic exchange such that the authentic subaltern voice can speak.

In terms of this project, I acknowledge that Dutta's dialogic approach is political, and views dialogue from the perspective of colonized people engaging with Western systems and concepts of dialogue. However, in relation to my earlier discussion on indigenous onto-epistemologies, Dutta asks specifically, "Can the subaltern be represented by academic knowledge?" (Dutta, 2011, pp. 55-56). Dutta is not simply problematizing whether or not the

subaltern voice can be rendered salient by the work of postcolonial scholar. Instead, he is asking which venues and genres of dialogue, and which specific works, can effectively articulate and magnify the subaltern viewpoint beyond traditions of scholarly writing.

Thus, the concept of dialogue must be shifted from practices derived from a liberal humanist perspective, and towards those associated with critical, hermeneutic, and postmodern positions. Here, Deetz and Simpson (2004) have argued that the liberal humanist perspective conceptualizes dialogue primarily as the practice of empathic listening, and as understanding achieved through participants' search for common meanings. In contrast, critical and postmodern perspectives are explicitly political, and emphasize the ability of power to both *constitute* and *erase* meaning. As Deetz (1992) notes, the power of the "modernist" (which we may read here as "Western") narrative of authority systematically distorts communication through a strategic production of meaning that favors existing, asymmetrical power relations. Dialogue then becomes an opportunity to balance power whenever colonial distortions of meaning have been revealed and rendered explicit. This shift is to acknowledge that the negotiation of meaning is more than a shared experience of intellects. Whereas in the liberal perspective, meaning is located in the cognitive processes of individuals, the critical hermeneutic assumption is that meaning is a practical accomplishment of dialogue (Deetz & Simpson, 2004). The postmodern perspective to dialogue "emphasizes the role of indeterminacy and 'otherness' in reclaiming conflicts, resisting closure, and opening new opportunities for people to be mutually involved in shaping new understanding of the world in which they live and work" (p. 142). Here, Bhabha (1994) further situates the postcolonial in the postmodern when he declares "The postcolonial perspective forces us to rethink the profound limitations of a consensual and collusive 'liberal' sense of cultural community. It insists that cultural and political identity are constructed through

a process of alterity” (p. 251). Dutta’s subaltern voice must be understood in these terms; the subaltern, or the indigenous, is a constructed subject who comes to claim their identity as a mode of resistance through the imaginative use of dialogue. Their point is not to collaborate and agree but to resist, adapt, or resolve the culturally sourced tensions that produce a hybrid subject.

To further approach the organizational communication focus of this study, I seek here to join this existing discussion with James Taylor’s (2004) interpretation of Bakhtin’s text-oriented approach to dialogue. Specifically, Taylor’s interpretation also emphasizes the epistemological production of texts.<sup>9</sup> As Taylor (2004) explains, “Bakhtin draws a very explicit distinction between the moment of Being, in its ‘transitiveness and open event-ness’. . . and its objectification in one kind of text or another, in which the experience takes on a content or sense” (p, 132). In this sense, Taylor (2004) proposes that “conversation is also text,” (p. 130). That is, encapsulating and fixing stories not only serves to objectify a speaker’s thoughts, but also to express the dynamics of a relationship between texts produced by different speakers. In other words, the production of narrative texts is as much an element of (inter-)organizational dialogue as is the active engagement of subjects in co-present conversation.

As the previous section illustrated, there is a tension between two discourses of forestry-related knowledge; a “modern” Westernized discourse, with its positivist, reductionist, and totalizing tendency to promote the subaltern voice by romanticizing and co-opting it, and the subaltern one that is simultaneously local, decentered, yet capable of accommodation. The contradiction that local-forestry conservationists must face with is to deal with an asymmetrical power structure that assumes the Western voice – principally located in the authority of state and funding agencies. Two questions, subsequently worth asking, then, include: “*What existing*

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<sup>9</sup> This notion will become particularly important in the ideas of textual agency in terms of communicative institutionalism, which will be covered in Ch. 2.

*dialogic spaces can indigenous POs utilize to promote subaltern voices?” and “How do NGO’s and their stakeholders collaborate in developing alternative forums for dialogue that respond to current insufficiency in institutional politics?” These questions involve more than merely choosing from among a collection of pre-existing dialogic genres. This is because there are structures of control that the subaltern voice also has to contend with, which I shall discuss further in the next chapter.*

### **Translation and Hybrid Texts**

Turning to this study’s other key concept, another postcolonial problem of meaning is found in Broadfoot and Munshi’s (2015) explication of *translation*. Similarly, to dialogue, translation functions as a means for POs to question and counter the authority and privileging of Western knowledge. Broadfoot and Munshi draw on Homi Bhabha’s concept of *hybridity* (a concept he in turn draws from Bakhtin) as a space for the subaltern construction of new modes of resistance. Here, “power may be unequal but its articulation may be equivocal” (Bhabha, 1996, p. 58). Bhabha calls these new modes *hybrid agencies* that “deploy a partial culture from which they emerge to construct visions of community, and versions of historic memory, that give narrative form to the minority positions they occupy” (p. 58). This sense of hybridity may be seen in Arjun Appadurai’s (1996) essay “The Decolonization of Indian Cricket,” which depicts the *vernacularization* of that aristocratic English game as a text. That text subsequently “became an emblem of Indian nationhood at the same time that it became inscribed, as a practice, onto the Indian (male) body” (p. 112).

Hybridization can also be understood in terms of what linguistic anthropologist William Hanks (2015) calls *commensurability*. That is, hybridization forms a solution to the problem of linguistic incommensurability. “When two languages or systems make distinctions sufficiently

different as to make it impossible to intertranslate directly,” Hanks notes, “then one translates via neologism and periphrastic description” (p. 37). In this sense, the success of a translation is not dependent on its semantic conformity to an original text; because in the process of translation understandings of both new and origination texts are transformed through the introduction of neologisms through hybridization. A particular translation, then, is not a fixed entity, and it potentially contributes to historical processes of decolonization by disrupting and transforming colonial interpretations of particular texts. Hanks describes this phenomenon historically in the case of the modern Maya, for whom the hybridized version of their language, developed through the Spanish colonization, became “the language of rebellion against the colonial order under which it was born” (p. 39). The commensurability of source and target language is also seen in material practices, as meaning can take form in “choreographies, gestures, body transformations, [and] the manipulation of artifacts” (Fausto & de Vienne, 2015, p. 227). That is to say, rituals are also texts<sup>10</sup> that can be translated and the productive space for the translation of rituals “is less a matter of producing a lingua franca and more a question generating a new ritual form” (p. 252). The transformational capacity of translation is thus a way for the colonized to also transform the colonizer. As Werbner (2001) explains, “in the colonial encounter, then, it is not just the colonized who are subjected to Western ways; the colonizers too are transformed, while the colonized deploy borrowed forms to tell their own, distinct narratives which ‘unsettle’ or ‘subvert’ the cultural authority of the colonizers” (p. 136, citing Bhabha, 1994, pp. 102-122).

Returning to the tensions that NGOs face, this hybridized cultural space theoretically allows the NGO, in effect to “speak two different types of languages” (Srinivas, 2008, p. 340)

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<sup>10</sup> Again, the significance of rituals as institutionalized texts will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 2. Suffice it to say at this point that meaning and translation are not simply of words, but of any symbolic system that can be shared within and between cultures.

and through successful translation “discursive boundaries are crossed or transgressed” (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2015, p. 165). Considered here, then, translation is not simply an explanation of meaning in terms that the subaltern in her target language can comprehend. Rather, translation is “a conscious, deliberate exploration of difference between linguistic and discursive cultural systems” (p. 165); it is a discursive mode through which the subaltern and the European can each understand the other’s evolving hybridity in dialogue.

What remains to be seen, then, in terms of natural resources and forests, are the translational practices that indigenous POs engage in that produce hybridized texts. To that extent, I propose another orienting question for this study: *“How do indigenous Peoples Organizations engage in translating subaltern knowledge in relation to existing forms of Western knowledge, in order to produce hybridized texts of policy work?”*

### **Conclusion: Promoting Alternative Discourses Surrounding Forestry Management**

In this opening chapter, I have reviewed the history underlying the connection between conservation and indigenous peoples’ advocacy work that animates the management of Philippine forest resources. In accomplishing that work, POs have to discursively negotiate a complex group of tensions that persist across time and space. The Regalian doctrine, concepts of “indigenous” and “development”, and hegemonic dichotomies of “Western” and “native” epistemologies each have their contradictions that should, in theory, manifest in dialogic events. Using a postcolonial lens, I described how these practices foster dialogic spaces that allow the subaltern more agency in relation to existing discourses of sourced in colonialism. I described how translation offers transformative opportunities for subaltern speakers through the construction of hybridized forms of indigenous and “modern” knowledge that can also empower the subaltern subject.



Nonetheless, this position leaves the researcher with the problem of theorizing how best to empower alternative discourses when faced with the “muscularity” of colonial meanings in discourses transmitted through texts such as the Regalian doctrine (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000).<sup>11</sup> In studying organizational discourse devoted to empowering subaltern discourses of resource management, the scholar needs to ask which ways of understanding discursive organizational behavior can better enable alternative forums and knowledge. In Chapter Two, I propose that organizations engaged in activities of translation and dialogue are doing institutional work. That is to say, POs *create, borrow, appropriate, imitate, and disperse texts as organizational practices*. Their subsequent isomorphisms may be understood as enacting processes of institutionalization through the construction of texts that bear a relationship to other texts. POs are thus engaged in reflexive and deliberate efforts of textual (re)production in order to accomplish sustainable forestry management -- along with social justice -- for indigenous peoples. These efforts are precisely the institutional work that indigenous POs are involved in, even as they wrestle with tensions sourced in colonial discourses.

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<sup>11</sup> Alvesson & Karreman (2000) used the term “muscular” in order to identify approaches that assume discourse is deterministic when discourse and meaning are tightly coupled, or even collapsed. This would seem to be the case with discourses surrounding the Regalian Doctrine.

## Chapter 2

## (De)Institutionalization, Discourse, and the Agency of Texts

*What is missing from the policy analyst's tool kit — and from the set of accepted, well-developed theories of human organization — is an adequately specified theory of collective action whereby a group of principals can organize themselves voluntarily to retain the residuals of their own efforts* (Ostrom, 2015, pp. 24-25).

*Now my hypothesis is this: if there are specific problems which are raised by the interpretation of texts because they are texts and not spoken language, and if these problems are the ones which constitute hermeneutics as such, then the social sciences may be said to be hermeneutical (1) inasmuch as their object displays some of the features constitutive of a text as text, and (2) inasmuch as their methodology develops the same kind of procedures as those of . . . text interpretation* (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 91).

I draw from the epigraphs above two concepts that I seek to place in conversation. The first, developed in Ostrom's quote, puts forward the notion that human beings are capable of creating self-governing structures of resource management. Ostrom's project endeavored to uncover the distinctly *institutional building blocks of economic social organization*. The second concept, defined in Ricoeur's quote, suggests that habitual human actions are meaningful and capable of being interpreted *as if they were texts*. Ricoeur's project, similar to Bakhtin's, was to

extend the concept of meaning beyond human cognition, and forward into an interaction between the self and the lifeworld. Both projects, as I will show later, involve conceptualizing *institutions as a complement to agency* in understanding human action.

Our discussion of texts in the previous chapter hinted at the possibilities for disrupting colonial discourses of policy formation surrounding the governance of Philippine forest resources. The tensions indigenous Peoples Organizations (POs) face in this process may be viewed as an effect of institutionalized texts -- texts that through discourse influence actors that relate dialogically with each other. Those texts affect POs as they attempt to negotiate a dialogic and translational space among actors with diverse interests. In other words, *how* these actors relate to each other is largely through a dialogic encounter where specific *texts are objects of discourse* (Foucault, 1972).<sup>12</sup> Actors rely on these texts to gain legitimacy, guide the production of other texts, and act as an object for disruption of established institutions.

Among scholars of development and conservation, the concept of *institutions* weighs heavily in conceptualizing policy surrounding communally-managed resources. Specifically, I will argue that policy formation is a mode of *institutionalization* — one that is reliant on particular practices, structures, processes, and meaning formations. In this chapter, I review several theories of institutionalization, seeking resources to depict the work of POs as the production, diffusion, maintenance, and disruption of persistent colonial institutions. I propose to revise conventional understandings of their practices of dialogue and translation by drawing on concepts of institutions. These concepts in turn draw from *rational-choice theories*, *neo-institutional theory*, *discourse theory*, and theories of *institutional work*. Specifically, I claim that

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<sup>12</sup> I use here Foucault's concept from *Archaeology of Knowledge*, where a regularity of objects (things spoken of) is one means of identifying the unity of a discourse. This is useful for analysis due to the frequency by which specific texts are referred to in the dialogic construction of policy texts.

the work that POs conduct involves translation and dialogue, which represent *communicative forms of institutional work*. This work is intentional, and directed at the disruption of existing colonial texts such as the Regalian Doctrine. I will subsequently depict institutions in the terms of organizational discourse theory, relying in particular on concepts (e.g., textual authority) developed by scholars affiliated with the so-called “Montreal School.”

I begin with a description of *rational-choice models* as applied in forestry and development research. Then I discuss how certain critiques of the rational-choice approach have led to the development of *neo-institutional theories*. Then, I will describe a *discourse approach* to neo-institutional theory, and discuss how its concepts relate to others drawn from the postcolonial theories presented in Chapter One. Using this “hybrid” of theories, I will subsequently propose research questions guiding this study of how POs accomplish the institutional work of dialogue and translation.

### **Institutional Theory in Organization Studies**

If nothing else, *rational-choice* theorizing of institutions opened a door for questioning a discourse of the Regalian Doctrine, and for developing alternative perspectives for conceptualizing systems of forest management and land tenure. Speaking generally, rational-choice theorists treat *institutions* as *sets of rules* that act to *constrain* the *agency* of *rational individuals* (Ostrom, 2015). Using a positivist ontology, rational-choice theorists have typically viewed institutions as both organic (i.e., developed from the bottom-up) and also as “tweaked” through design (i.e. unilateral, top-down intervention). Thus, the scholarly task is to better understand the institutions of effective conservation management, and apply related lessons to other cases (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). However, this understanding of institutions as a set of rules has its critics among forestry, conservation, and development scholars. Some critics

subsequently developed *neo-institutional* theories in organization studies as a way to broaden understanding of related processes of institutionalization (e.g. Cleaver, 2002; Babili et al., 2015).

In the sections that follow, I describe *two versions* of institutional theory that I will subsequently relate to PO work. I first describe *rational-choice theory* as applied to the management of common pool resources, and also some critiques of that theory. In the second section, I describe *neo-institutional theories* (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 1995) that allow a broader and more interpretive understanding of institutionalization. In the third section, I briefly discuss the concept of *institutional work* (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) that seeks to recover human agency in processes of institutionalization.

### **Rational-Choice Theory in the Study of Common Pool Resources**

As depicted in rational-choice theories, institutions serve to provide consistency and continuity for the communal management of what Ostrom (2015) calls *common pool resources*. By this term, she means “systems that generate finite quantities of resource units so that one person's use subtracts from the quantity of resource units available to others” (Ostrom, 2002, p. 1317). Examples of these systems include irrigation networks, fisheries, grazing lands and, of course, forests. These resources are “common” either because clear property boundaries are difficult to establish, such as a system of forests and grazing lands, or the resource is non-stationary, such as fisheries or the water in an irrigation system. In this view, resources need to be shared equitably among users because they are finite and subject to degradation through over-extraction, and in order to avoid “free riders” — individuals who attempt to appropriate more than a fair share (Ostrom, 2015).

The need to manage common pool resources becomes important wherever resources are subject to threat of depletion through over-extraction, and therefore need to be systematically

allocated. Ostrom's (2015) landmark work, "Managing the Commons," introduced the idea that neither a centralized state authority nor private ownership could effectively manage communally-shared resources. Rather, her study of empirical cases suggested that organically-developed, contextually-sensitive systems were often the most successful. Ostrom's writings and scholarly legacy formed a reaction to Hardin's (1968/2009) famous article "The Tragedy of the Commons." In this work, Hardin proposed that property held in common (i.e. not allocated by either centralized regulation or market mechanisms) would eventually lead to degradation as resource users attempted to maximize their individual returns from resource extraction. Specifically, Ostrom reacted to Hardin's assumption that property could be controlled only by the rules of either state governance *or* private capital markets, and that the rational choices that individuals make would invariably lead to the degradation of the commons. Instead, her review of studies of communally managed irrigation systems revealed that resource users (or "appropriators" in her language) typically created *institutional systems of governance based on communicative practices* that could sustain the commons. She found that communities, many of them indigenous, devised systems of rules through collaboration and dialogue that facilitated allocation and enforcement of collective access to resources. Noting that these sets of rules produced *institutional* practices, Ostrom proposed that the understanding of institutionalization formed a central problem in designing policies that could avoid "the tragedy of the commons" (e.g. through practices of decentralization). Ostrom's theory introduced a universal set of mathematically-grounded principles for institutional design facilitating the communal management of resources.

As suggested by Ostrom's work, rational-choice models typically use a positivist epistemology that views institutions as a set of empirically-verifiable rules that social actors

draw from in order on to guide their actions. Grounded in the economics of *game theory*, these models assume that individuals may be depended on to rationally exchange short-term extraction rewards in favor of the long-term rewards of collaboratively developed, institutional rules of resource allocation. Rational-choice models of economics thus assume that each individual participating in a transaction makes a self-serving decision concerning what might best reward him or her in each instance (Scott, 1995). These so-called “thin” models of rational-choice are seen as effective at predicting finite, short-term market transactions. However, adequate consideration of longer-term — potentially infinite — time-frames required the inclusion of multiple factors outside of these transactions (Ostrom, 1998). Institutions are, in this revision, still sets of rules that govern the use and allocation of resource. However, these expressions of rational-choice are local and organic, and are spontaneously developed through communication among the actors concerned. In the language of rational-choice theorists of community, “Institutions can be seen as sets of formal and *informal* rules and norms that shape *interactions of humans with others and nature*” (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999, p. 637, emphasis added). Or as Ostrom (2005) explains, “rules. . . are defined to be shared understandings by participants about enforced prescriptions concerning what actions (or outcomes) are *prescribed, prohibited, or permitted*” (p. 18, cf. Wall, 2014, p. 57, emphasis from source). These rules include regulations, instructions, precepts or principles created by a governing authority (Wall, 2014). Ostrom argued further that political leadership had a vested interest in sustaining institutions that govern the commons, and that through cultivating the rational-choice paradigm, other actors might come to acknowledge the importance of collective governance as being in their own long-term interest (Peters, 2012).

The institutions-as-rules approach has obvious appeals for development and forestry scholars. Empirical studies using mathematically-grounded models are used in development studies to discover *in situ* the rules that guided successful, local management of resources. As Ostrom (1998) describes, these rules are organically developed: “Field research also shows that individuals systematically engage in collective action to provide local public goods or manage common-pool resources without an external authority to offer inducements or impose sanctions” (p. 2). Rational-choice models thus provided a path forward for the development of community based natural resource management (CBNRM). The successful recovery from forest degradation — not just as the avoidance of deforestation, but also the restoration of previously deforested land — could thus be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, using a set of variables to deliver a set of policies in order to achieve those goals. Here, the communal management of common pool resources are reduced to a set of design principles that provide a basis for designing institutions facilitating successful communal management (Ostrom, 2002; Brondizio, Ostrom, & Young, 2009). In particular, the community management of forests could be studied using universalized models that could describe indigenous practices through a discrete set of rules for designing successful resource management. Ostrom and her colleagues developed frameworks such as “Institutional Analysis and Development” (IAD) that have been used to examine local institutions in terms of factors affecting transaction costs among rational actors (Imperial, 1999).

Importantly for the purposes of this study, these researchers indirectly “discovered” *communication* to be a significant factor in developing these design principles (Ostrom, 1998; Brondizio, Ostrom, & Young, 2009). In a series of experiments adopting rational-choice models, development scholars determined that the occurrence of communication — particularly face-to-face encounters among group members — was a useful predictor of successful resource



management (e.g. Ostrom, Gardner, & Walker, 1995).<sup>13</sup> Here, communication was primarily viewed as interaction that implemented the decentralization of management from national governments to local communities (Babili & Wiersum, 2013).

Despite these efforts, Ostrom's design approach has generated criticism among development and forestry scholars. For example, Babili, et al. (2015) identify shortcomings in Ostrom's conception of common property regimes (CPR):

In the first place, Ostrom emphasized the stability of institutions as a key success factor, while giving less attention to institutional dynamics. . . Second, Ostrom's design principles have not always been observed in successfully managed CPRs ... Third, Ostrom's design principles underrate contextual factors such as the influence of external actors on local practices (p.383).<sup>14</sup>

Babili et al. (2015) subsequently noted that sociological approaches could account for how institutions could “drift” — that is, how their practices and meanings could change (citing March and Olsen, 1989). Cleaver (2002) also showed that despite the best efforts at design, locally-produced institutions ultimately *hybridized* existing systems of organizing with those imposed by design. Subsequently, organizational theories of *neo-institutionalism*<sup>15</sup> (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 1995; March & Olsen, 1989) were introduced to this debate, partly as a critique of rational-choice theories. In this critique, those theories appeared to be overly deterministic and functionalist, and therefore unable to account for

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<sup>13</sup> Development scholars do not seem to acknowledge communication as a distinct field of study. Neo-institutionalism in organization studies frequently do, especially in the organizational discourse work deriving from Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004).

<sup>14</sup> This passage cites Agrawal 2001; Cleaver 2002; Havnevik 2006; Quinn et al. 2007.

<sup>15</sup> This term is rendered differently by various authors cited in this work. DiMaggio & Powell (1991) and Peters (2012) use the term “new institutionalism.” Scott (1995) uses “neoinstitutionalism.” Della Porta (2005) and Kuhn (2011) use the postmodern “(neo)institutionalism” while various other works (notably, Cornelissen, et al., 2015, as well as Phillips Lawrence & Hardy, 2004) use “neo-institutionalism,” which is the preferred use here.

the formation of cognitive and symbolic systems of meaning, such as ideology or mysticism, that undergird many of these indigenously developed practices (Friedland & Alford, 1991).

Relevant to this dissertation, some forestry and development scholars have rejected rational-choice theories in order to consider how “struggles over meaning are as much a part of the process of resource allocation as are struggles over surplus or the labor process” (Berry, 1988, p. 66, cf. Dove, Sajise, & Doolittle, 2011, p. 19). As Dove, et al. (2011) note, it is not simply the forest that becomes degraded by historically sourced state regimes, but systems of local knowledge as well. Scholars studying the on-the-ground work performed by local conservation organizations include Lynch (2005), who questions the four-part typology of land tenure systems (private, state, commons, and open access) that emerged out of rational-choice development models. Lynch argues that such schema are overly reductionist, and ignore the significance of observable, nuanced, and locally constructed understandings of land tenure systems.

As a result, I propose in this study to attend to the *socially-constructed nature* of institutions among *reflexive agents*, who are working within *historically-produced* institutional constraints, such as the Regalian Doctrine. In the next section, I describe the neo-institutional paradigm, especially in terms of organizations, as a response to rational-choice models. More specifically, I will review this paradigm in terms of approaches that depict institutions as *cognitive structures* that are *practically-developed* among *organizational actors*. This review will pave the way for my development of a *communicative* view of institutionalization in the following section.

### **Neo-institutionalism: Institutionalization as Fields and Isomorphism**

As discussed in the previous section, neo-institutional theories have emerged as a challenge to rational-choice models of institutions (Peters, 2012). As Scott (1995) explains, “a rational choice perspective assumes that actors behave expediently to pursue their preferences within a situation. . . [In game theory] actors are presumed to have clear preferences of ordering, to be knowledgeable about the relation of alternatives to consequences, and to act so as to maximize their preferences” (p. 50, emphasis mine).<sup>16</sup> Among organizational scholars, this challenge had been taken up by a number of theorists, especially in Meyer and Rowan (1977), Zucker (1977), and DiMaggio & Powell (1983). Generally, these theorists have developed a social-constructionist understanding that draws principally from Berger and Luckmann’s (1966) concepts of institutions and institutionalization, as well as from Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of fields. Here, Scott’s (1995) synthesis of institutional theories describes institutions as “consist[ing] of cognitive, normative, and regulative structures and activities that provide stability and meaning to social behavior” (p. 33). In Scott’s typology, these cognitive (symbols and meaning), normative (values and norms), and regulative (rules and punishments) aspects of institutions are all interwoven. Different theories will emphasize different aspects, based on their assumptions about the agency of actors in organizational settings. Rational-choice theories, for example, tend to emphasize the regulative aspect at the expense of the normative and cognitive aspects, which remains “grounded in a social context and . . . a moral dimension that takes into account one’s relations and obligations to others in the situation” (p. 51).

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<sup>16</sup> I am deliberately simplifying this argument in order to highlight the contrast with Ostrom’s (1990) game theory orientation to rational-choice that assumes a great deal of rationality in interactions between actors who assess the costs and benefits of accepting institutions as a system of rules. As Scott (1995) would clarify, some versions of rational-choice in economics and political science lean more towards Herbert Simon’s (1982; 1991) concept of bounded rationality, which emphasizes as well the constraints to action on individual and collective agency.

Of particular interest for neo-institutional theorists is the *cognitive* aspect of symbols and meaning, where “choice is informed and constrained by the ways that knowledge is constructed” (Scott, 1995, p. 51). Neo-institutional theory is strongly concerned with questions of *meaning* and its influence on *structures* and *action*. Here, the symbolic attributes of institutions are held to “constrain and shape politics through the construction and elaboration of meaning” (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 39). Using the social constructionist language of Berger and Luckmann (1966), Zucker (1977) depicts *meaning as an artifact of institutionalization*:

[I]nstitutionalization. . . is the process by which individual actors *transmit what is socially defined as real* and, at the same time, at any point in the process the *meaning* of an act can be defined as more or less a taken-for-granted part of this social reality. Institutionalized acts, then, must be perceived as both objective and exterior. *Acts are objective* when they are potentially *repeatable* by other actors *without changing the common understanding* of the act, while *acts are exterior* when subjective *understanding* of acts *is reconstructed as intersubjective* understanding so that the acts *are seen as part of the external world*. (p. 728, emphasis mine).

In Zucker’s definition of institutionalization, the persistence of cultural practices is accounted for through the socially constructed meaningfulness of acts. Viewed from this perspective, institutions are more than just a set of commonly-agreed-upon rules. Instead, they include sets of *meaningful practices* that become available to a large group of actors, as these practices and their meanings *diffuse* across time and space (March & Olsen, 1989). Here, meaning is constructed as actors engage in *sensemaking* of past actions (Weick, 1979; 1995), and institutions activated in this process are sustained, as long as the relevant systems of meaning and

action remain aligned. Conversely, *de-institutionalization* occurs as corresponding meanings and actions become decoupled, and opportunities for the articulation of alternative practices and their meanings become available (Zucker, 1987; Maguire & Hardy, 2009).

Neo-institutional theories thus pay particular attention to practices and relationships that constitute institutions. They consider how these phenomena originate, how they are dispersed and maintained, and also how they are subverted and destroyed across multiple organizations. Two concepts remain prevalent in this *macro-* view of institutionalization developed among organization scholars.<sup>17</sup> These concepts, *institutional fields* and *institutional isomorphism*, were both introduced in DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) seminal article on neo-institutional theory. In this work, DiMaggio and Powell argued that the *action effects* of institutional processes manifest in *inter-organizational relationships*, which may be grouped analytically into *institutional fields* (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000).<sup>18</sup> Here, institutional fields are conceptualized as an analytic-heuristic *meso-*layer existing between discrete organizations and their larger societies. Specifically, these proposed fields help the analyst to determine a population of organizations that can (and do) influence each other (Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000;

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<sup>17</sup> If the reader inspects the references, the majority of the scholarly works in recent years on the relationships between institutions and organizations has been in Academy of Management journals (AMR and AMA), including many of the seminal works referenced in this dissertation. Some also appear in journals such as *Organization*, *Journal of Management Studies*, or *Journal of Management Inquiry*. Communication journals, especially *Management Communication Quarterly*, seem to not give institutional theory much journal space. Worth noting though is Lammers and Barbour (2006) article in *Communication Theory* which first sought to outline an organizational communication theory of institutions. I mention this attention to journals because the paucity of scholarly work among organizational communication scholars shows that the concept seems to be understudied and theorized in our sub-field of organizational communication.

<sup>18</sup> I must point out an inconsistency among various theorists on the terminology of institutional fields. Leblebici et al. (1991) call these "interorganizational fields" in their study of interorganizational collaboration. The concept first appeared as "organizational fields" in DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) seminal work. Scott (1995) also uses "organizational fields" in his typology of scales in institutional research. The concept is sourced principally from Bourdieu (1977), for whom fields are a location to account for hierarchical relationships among organizations. Fligstein & McAdam (2012) also appropriated Bourdieu's hierarchical understanding in their formulation of "strategic action fields," which attempts a synthesis of organizational, social movement, and neo-institutional theory." I mention these distinctions to avoid reification of this macro-level heuristic that aids analysis.

Scott, 1995). Institutional fields help the analyst group the relational interactions that occur among organizational and individual actors, through which practices and their meanings are diffused and maintained (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). While collaboration is seen as an important element in their formation (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000), fields are also conceptualized as *locations of competition*. This competition develops as organizational actors contend to achieve desired goals of societal stability or change (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Institutional fields have subsequently proved an important concept in accounting for institutionalization developed in inter-organizational collaboration (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000),

Institutional *isomorphism* is a second macro-level concept invoked by neo-institutional scholarship. This concept attempts to explain why and how organizations that pay attention to each other seem to become remarkably alike in terms of organizational structures and actions (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Meyer and Rowan (1977) depict isomorphism as a symbolic process wherein organizational actors seeking to develop public legitimacy *align their actions to existing institutional discourses* through the enactment of myths and ceremonies. This process of achieving legitimation through isomorphism was explored further by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) who outlined a typology of isomorphisms that occurs among actors influencing each other through an institutional field. In their typology, specifically, isomorphism occurs through three mechanisms. First, *coercive isomorphism* occurs through the punitive use of rules and threats of penalty. Second, *mimetic isomorphism* describes a response by firms to uncertainty, who then choose to *imitate* the forms and practices of apparently successful organizations. Finally, *normative isomorphism* accounts for how organizations adopt prior-authorized practices in order to claim legitimacy with their stakeholders. DiMaggio and

Powell (1983) conceptualized these processes as modes of influence developed among organizations, who affect each other through their collective cultivation of institutional fields.

For the current purpose, the significance of isomorphism is found not so much in the details of these variants, but in their common assumptions about the nature of cognitive (symbolic) and communicative processes. As Selznick (1996) notes, the consistency among these concepts of isomorphism is that actors respond to a cultural environment that has little to do with particular transactions (i.e., as emphasized in rational-choice theories). Instead, he argues,

. . . the interaction of culture and organization is mediated by socially constructed mind[s], that is, by patterns of perception and evaluation. People in organizations live with (and welcome) bounded rationality, and they cope with uncertainty by relying on routines, which may become rituals (p. 274).

The significance of these neo-institutional theories is that they open the possibility of examining the symbolic behavior of actors as they struggle with the meaningfulness of actions. However, isomorphism and fields have been critiqued as advancing a relatively macro-<sup>19</sup> perspective that simultaneously *assumes* the foundations of individual and organizational agency, but then *neglects* to document their expression in actual micro-practices and -processes (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). To that effect, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) developed a revised theory of individual and collective agency depicting how individuals and organizations work to transform institutions in organizational settings.

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<sup>19</sup> Scott's (1995) typology regards fields as "meso" in relation to practices and larger societies or cultures.

### **Institutional Work as Micro-perspective**

As I have discussed above, a principal difficulty with much of the neo-institutional approach has been its tendency to assume communicative micro-foundations while actually engaging in macro-institutional analysis (Powell & Colyvas, 2008). As Kuhn (2012) explains, the pervasive *micro-macro divide* in contemporary social theory typically depicts macro-concepts as the effects of an assumed set of micro-practices, in which social actors are engaged. That is, macro concepts ignore micro-events developed among actors deploying their agency. Alternatively, we might consider how, even as actors are guided by institutions, they also reflexively understand and intentionally guide the process of institutionalization (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Potentially, this problem of agency is addressed by examining the micro-practices of reflexive actors. In response, DiMaggio (1988) introduced the concept of *institutional entrepreneurship*. “New institutions,” he argued, “arise when organized actors with sufficient resources (institutional entrepreneurs) see in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly” (DiMaggio, 1988, cf. Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004, p. 198; see also Hardy & Maguire, 2008). Similarly, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) noted that in empirical studies, the agency of organizational actors could also be seen as purposefully engaging in processes of institutionalization. They subsequently proposed the concept of *institutional work* as “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (p. 215). In other words, rather than seeing institutionalization as a vague, abstract process affecting organizational actors, this new view proposed that organizational actors were themselves deliberately engaging in actions that evoked and configured institutional forces within relevant fields. Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca (2009) subsequently suggested that



a significant part of the promise of institutional work as a research area is to establish a broader vision of agency in relationship to institutions, one that avoids depicting actors either as “cultural dopes” trapped by institutional arrangements, or as hypermuscular institutional entrepreneurs (p. 1).

This depiction of organizational actors, they suggest, involves formulating a *recursive relationship* between action and institutions. In this relationship, “institutions provide templates for action, as well as regulative mechanisms that enforce those templates, and action affects those templates and regulative mechanisms” (p. 7).

Focusing on institutional work thus provides the study of institutions with two benefits, both of which are relevant to the present study. First, it advocates for further interrogation of the role of agency in processes of institutionalization. Second, it encourages the use of a critical-theoretical lens in analyzing institutional processes (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011). I will leave further discussion of institutional work for a later section in this chapter. I turn now instead to elaborate these benefits by explaining the *communication as constitutive of organizations* (CCO) perspective, and modeling its application to the analysis of subaltern texts. First, however, I introduce into this discussion a discourse-oriented perspective on neo-institutionalism.

### **Communicative Institutionalism and the Production of Textual Agency**

To summarize this discussion thus far, rational-choice theories of institutions initially proved useful in analyzing the management of common pool resources (Ostrom, 1990). While these theories provided tools for analyzing communally-organized institutions, these efforts were also critiqued by some forestry and development scholars as insufficiently accountable for the influence of forces exterior to the transactional analysis of factors (e.g. Cleaver, 2002). Rational-

choice models were also critiqued for being overly reductionist in privileging individual choice, while ignoring larger cultural and social forces affecting institutionalization (Scott, 1995). This controversy led to the development of a theoretical framework based on cognitive/symbolic models, leading to a social constructionist understanding of institutionalization (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977). These theories rely on a macro view of institutions privileging concepts such as institutional fields and isomorphism, which nonetheless assumed communicative micro-foundations (e.g. Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Some neo-institutional theorizing subsequently accommodated a micro-perspective, such as work around institutional entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988) and institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Kuhn (2012) subsequently proposed a communication as constitutive view as a way to bridge the incongruity of proposed micro and macro perspectives.

In the sections that follow, I present a discourse view of institutions that derives primarily from neo-institutionalism, while reflecting a communication-centered approach. In sequence, I will: (1) describe communicative institutionalism as a distinct critique and extension of neo-institutionalism; (2) explain organizational discourse as composed of texts that express agency; (3) review Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy's (2004) discourse theory of institutionalization, which centers the production and relationships among texts as a basis for institutionalization; and finally, (4) extend this association of texts and institutions by proposing how textual agency may account for the durability of colonial texts such as the Regalian Doctrine. To confirm, Lawrence & Suddaby (2009) have also proposed a discourse perspective on institutional work. I will address that perspective later, when I revisit the concept of institutional work in light of this proposed perspective.

## Communicative Institutionalism and the Critique of Neo-institutionalism

In their recent introduction to a special topic issue in *The Academy of Management Review*, Cornelissen, et al. (2015) critique the cognitive focus of neo-institutionalism as “reducing social reality to individual and collective cognitive categories and cognitive dispositions, as ‘microfoundations’ that are assumed to explain the endurance as well as the change of institutions” (p. 11). In terms of the current discussion, concepts such as isomorphism and institutional fields (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012), make the related assumption that individual social actors within a field somehow understand how to unproblematically carry out institutionalization. As well, communication tends in this view to be reduced to the *transmission of information* (e.g., Zucker, 1977) to explain the durability of institutions in terms of the intergenerational diffusion of practices and their meanings. This explanation, however, ignores how communication practice also forms and negotiates systems of meaning through interaction conducted among individual speakers.

Alternatively, Cornelissen, et al. (2015) proposed a communication as constitutive perspective of institutions in order to address these critiques. Generally, this constitutive perspective views communication as an “ongoing, dynamic, interactive process of manipulating symbols toward the creation, maintenance, destruction, and/or transformation of meanings” (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009). Under this paradigm, institutions come to be seen as an *effect* of communication practices (Cornelissen, et al., 2015). In line with this recommendation, these scholars proposed communicative institutionalism as a solution to the insufficiency of micro-foundational explanations in order to bridge the micro-macro divide. This development may in

turn facilitate development of robust, communication-based theories for the analysis of institutions.

More specifically, *communicative institutionalism* is a communication-centered approach to neo-institutional theory, in which “speech and other forms of symbolic interactions are not just seen as expressions or reflections of inner thoughts of collective intentions but as potentially formative of institutional reality” (Cornelissen, et al. 2015, p. 11). This shift in perspective is an important one for organizational communication scholars interested in the *communication as constitutive* perspective, (Ashcraft, et al., 2009; Putnam & Nicotera, 2009). Generally, the communication as constitutive perspective holds that organizations, and by implication institutions, cannot exist apart from their communicative practices. More specifically, it holds that *texts* form a crucial part of a network of actors through which the collective agency and authority of an organization emerges (Cooren, 2004; Kuhn, 2008). In terms of institutions, this view provides a micro-perspective that allows a “scaling-up” of discursive phenomena to account for perceived macro-processes of institutionalization (Cornelissen, et al., 2015).

“Scaling up,” however, requires attention to particular micro-processes of communication. In the section that follows, I explicate a theory centered on the related concepts of dialogue and translation that were developed in Chapter 1.

### **Organizational Discourse as Text and Agency**

In Chapter One, I developed a postcolonial perspective on communication for social change involving the dialogic production of texts. In that perspective, texts play an important role as facilitators of knowledge, meaning, and the voice of subaltern agency. In terms of the constitutive view, discourse is viewed as not only an organizational process; instead, organizations and organizing are seen as the result of an interplay of discourse and action. In its

usage here, *organizational discourse* is defined as “a *structured collection of texts* embodied in practices of talking and writing (as well as a large variety of visual representations and cultural artifacts) that bring organizationally related objects into being as texts are produced, disseminated, and consumed” (Grant, et al., 2004, p. 3, emphasis mine). In this passage, Grant et al. imply that texts are embodied and activated through the actions of organizational agents, which “bring. . . objects into being.” Importantly, these agents include not only written texts, but also non-discursive and hybrid forms, such as isomorphic performance of organizational myths and rituals (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), and material objects imbued with symbolic properties (e.g., architecture, uniforms, traffic signs, etc., Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009).

This posthumanist theorizing of organizational texts is a hallmark of the “Montreal School” (see especially Taylor & van Every, 2000; Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009) associated with the larger “communication as constitutive of organizations” (CCO) tradition (Ashcraft et al., 2009; Putnam & Nicotera, 2009). Its related conception of the agentic quality of texts is well expressed in Cooren’s (2004) account of a note written by a manager as a reminder to himself:

By appropriating the agency of the notes, he becomes more powerful. But this power derives from the capacity of the notes to do things that humans alone do poorly, that is, reminding or recalling something throughout space and time. Through this appropriation, the manager’s memory is increased, which aids in structuring different activities. In effect, programs of actions can be recalled any time the manager decides to look at his notes (p. 379).

In this instance, the scope of textually-configured space and time is relatively narrow; the notes are never really far from the manager, and usually, the reminder is about something relatively immediate. But we may also see how the agency of the note operates similarly across

the much larger space and time scales of colonial texts, in that a text carries out and reproduces the originating authority of some monarch from a distant past. More specifically, that monarch used human agents to carry out a doctrine that was constituted through a discourse and handed down in embodied form as legal doctrine. That is to say, the text not only *witnesses* to the authority of the original authors (through discourse), but that such authority becomes contained in the discourse through the text itself, once it has become de-authored. Kuhn (2008) associates this function with the concept of *authoritative text*. Such a text, he argues, “projects particular conceptions of structure and responsibility; it represents, mediates, directs attention, disciplines, and links people and practices through conversations that, at least putatively, can be said to relate to a set of canonical firm level outcomes” (p. 1236). Interpreting this argument through a postcolonial lens, we may see that the colonial text, in effect, becomes *an agent of colonial rule*, and continues to express an original authority as it influences actors across time and space.

Explaining exactly how this authority is inscribed into a text lies at the heart of Montreal School theorizing. Taylor and Van Every (2000), for example, describe how organizations are constituted through the *bidirectional flow* developed between texts and conversations. Specifically, they argue that conversations – or, “the universe of shared interaction-through-language,” (p. 35) — among an organization’s members become *imbricated* and captured in some durable form (usually, but not necessarily in writing) into texts, as organizational members *co-orient* themselves to particular objects of discourse. The resulting texts continue to be used by human actors in conversation, thereby constraining the dynamics of action. Communication, in this view, results from “a cyclic (and simultaneous) *translation* of conversations into text and text into conversations” (p. 61, emphasis mine). According to Cooren and Fairhurst (2009), texts may also include meaningful artifacts, “like a monitoring device, a uniform, or an architectural

element” (p. 137). Thus, textual agency is not simply a property of the texts as a prior written form, but also exists in the memory traces of actors as they inscribe meaning into their performances. In this process, “[textual] *presence makes workers do things they would not do otherwise*” (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009, p. 138, emphasis from source). This agentic property emerges out of a relational network of actors<sup>20</sup>; authority for and over their actions is recreated as a text (in both immediate form or remembered traces) “travels” through time and space via conversations among actors (Taylor & Van Every, 2000).

How is it that even performances can be viewed as textual? Here, we may recall earlier discussion of Ricoeur’s (1973) argument that performances may be conceptualized as *meaningful action*. In this view, performances “may be grasped and understood within the process of interaction, which is quite similar to the process of interlocution in the field of discourse” (p. 97-98). Actors derive meaning from an action in “the same way that interlocution is overcome in writing, interaction is overcome in numerous situations in which we treat action as a fixed text” (p. 98). Not just any action may count as a text however. An action becomes meaningful in the same way as a text when the meaning of action becomes detached from a specific actor, just as text is de-authored when “it is done by several agents in such a way that the role of each of them cannot be distinguished from the role of the others, but also because our deeds escape us and have effects which we did not intend” (p. 101).

This extension of what counts as a text includes artifacts, action, and other manifestations of material culture. As archaeologist Ian Hodder (2012) suggests, human cognition is extended through *things*, which produce and reproduce material culture through *entanglement*, or a mutual, dialectical dependency among humans and things. Things not only aid our memory, as in

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<sup>20</sup> This notion draws from Actor Network Theory, see Latour (2005) and Law (2009), who are invoked by the Montreal School to explain this posthumanist understanding of textual agency.

the case of Cooren's (2004) manager and his notes; we and things are caught in webs of dependency that produce agency, and through their relationships extend cognition, memory, and meaning, as Hodder (2012) explains:

Humans may give fleeting things (thoughts, feelings) significance and duration. . . But in their own, ideas, smells, glances, spoken words and thoughts do not have an enduring existence that can act back and create dependence. It is only when translated into some durable form that they do come to be central parts of entanglements (p. 219).

We might think of, Hodder's *entanglements* as forming the relationships of humans and non-humans that constitute what we have been discussing here as *texts*; it is through the thing or ritual that the agency supplied by a thought or feeling may be extended into the future. Indeed, Hodder was thinking of the *longue durée* of archaeology where meaning projects across large extents of time through artifacts recovered in archaeological digs. In the ontology used here, therefore, texts include action and artifacts whose meanings are contingent on the relationships between humans and things that may persist indefinitely.

That extension of texts to include artifacts and meaningful action brings up an important ontological question: What are *not* texts -- at least as conceptualized here? An answer is provided by Latour (2005), who claims that things (meaningful action and artifacts), leave *traces* that are evidenced in *accounts*:

To be accounted for, objects have to enter into *accounts*. If no *trace* is produced, they offer no information to the observer and will have no visible effect on other agents. They remain silent and are no longer actors: they remain, literally, unaccountable (p. 79, emphasis mine).



According to Latour (2005), traces connect social situations, thus avoiding the incommensurability of the social purpose of objects. That is, for the agency of an object to become observable in a social situation, knowledge about the object must also enter discourse; the object functions as a text by invoking memory traces — it makes a difference in a situation as it enters discourse once it is spoken about in conversation or incorporated into other texts. By extension, this view of objects extends as well to meaningful action and artifacts; for an action or artifact to be meaningful, it must also become an *object of discourse*. What is *not* a text, to answer the question, are things that do not enter into accounts; that is, they do not become objects of discourse.

One final consideration regarding the agency of a text involves how texts come to influence, and are influenced by, other texts. This relationship is a property of discourse, *intertextuality*, which Taylor (1999)<sup>21</sup> defines as “the ways in which symbolic forms are meaningfully configured through their relationships with broader cultural and historical discourses” (p. 61). The concept derives, as well, from Bakhtin’s dialogism, for whom “interpretation is never complete because every word is a response to previous words and elicits further responses” (Allen, 2000, p. 28). Drawing upon Bakhtin’s work, Julia Kristeva (1980) suggests that texts are not distinct, individual objects; rather, texts are cultural products (social texts) that cannot be separated from a larger collection of texts that constitute a culture (Allen, 2000). In organizational communication studies, Kuhn (2008) has appropriated intertextuality to extend Montreal School theorizing by explaining the persistent quality of texts as

. . . where texts, or specific elements of them, exist in complex copresent relations to other texts. Texts can exist within, and penetrate, one another; texts

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<sup>21</sup> To avoid confusion, the reader should note that Taylor (1999) refers to Bryan Taylor currently at the University of Colorado Boulder, and not James. R. Taylor of the Montreal School.

that construct “potent” networks of other texts around them are likely to persist over time and space. Intertextuality is important for its ability to highlight both the affiliations between texts and the implications of these affiliations for the conversations they enter (p. 1237).

Thus, the *bidirectional flow* between conversation and texts as theorized by Taylor and Van Every (2000) is extended to include flows between texts. Texts influence, and are influenced by, other texts as meanings are negotiated by participants in discourse through conversations. At the institutional scale, the tracing of these intertextual relations may also be expanded into *interdiscursivity* (Fairclough, 1993). This concept describes “how communication in *institutional settings* can embody and transform the scripts, frames, voices and interests of multiple discourses” (Taylor, 1999, p. 62, emphasis mine, cf. Hansen, 1995). Taylor (1999) passingly refers to these institutional speakers as *bricoleurs*, a conception remarkably similar to Cleaver’s (2002, as referenced in Chapter 1) discussion of *institutional bricolage*. Specifically, Cleaver explains her theory of institutionalization (citing Douglas, 1986) as “gathering and applying analogies and styles of thought already part of existing institutions. *Symbolic formulae* are used repeatedly in the construction of institutions, thereby economising on cognitive energy by offering easy classification and legitimacy” (p. 15, emphasis mine). Cleaver’s use of Douglas’s “symbolic formulae” as cognitive object is analogous to “texts” as imagined here. Although apparently unintended, Cleaver’s passage establishes a remarkable confluence between the intellectual streams of rational-choice models, postmodern interdiscursivity, and neo-institutional isomorphism. This confluence presents an opportunity to describe a discourse theory of institutions that depicts them as an effect of communication, and that also aligns with the communicative institutionalism of Cornelissen, et al (2015) described earlier.

### **(De)Institutionalization as a Dialogic Process through Discourse**

Among the communicative institutional perspectives described earlier by Cornelissen, et al. (2015), is included a discourse theory of institutionalization developed by Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004). Drawing from neo-institutional theory of organization, Phillips, et al. (2004) propose texts, rather than action, as the analytical units of institutionalization. Specifically, they argue that unlike action, texts can be transmitted through space and time. As a result, “[i]t is primarily through texts that information about actions is widely distributed and come to influence the actions of others. Institutions, therefore, can be understood as the products of discursive activity that influences actions” (p. 635, citing Taylor & Van Every, 1993). This definition of discourse resembles Grant, et al.’s (2004) image of a “structured collection of texts.” It also, however, extends the influence of text beyond the boundaries of any single organization into the institutional field, where texts may come to influence numerous organizations. Thus discourse, and its component texts, “exist in a particular *field* and . . . produce the social categories and norms that shape the understandings and behaviors of actors” (Phillips et al., 2004, p. 638, emphasis mine). Drawing again from DiMaggio and Powell (1983), Phillips et al. (2004) describe the institutional field is as containing texts, and that the “production and diffusion of texts are associated with all three isomorphic pressures that play a role in the institutionalization process” (p. 639). Two conclusions drawn from this line of reasoning are (1) that institutional practices and their meanings are the products of discourse, and (2) that actions that produce novel and surprising texts leave *traces* (Cooren & Taylor, 1997; see also Latour, 2005 above), which are thus more likely to become institutionalized.

In line with that discussion, Phillips, et al. (2004) describe an organizational discourse model of institutionalization that incorporates this understanding of discourse, text, and action.

Drawing from theorizing of legitimation in the traditions of social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) and sensemaking (Weick, 1995), they theorize that actors construct the meaning and legitimacy of texts retroactively, and selectively invoke and activate texts in order to legitimize evolving action.<sup>22</sup>

Let us now consider the converse process. Building on Phillips et al.'s (2004) work, Maguire and Hardy (2009) describe how institutions come to be disrupted through discourse. They subsequently define *deinstitutionalization* as “the process by which institutionalized practices are abandoned. . . ‘not only because better options are available’. . . but because practices have lost their original meaning” (p. 150).<sup>23</sup> Additionally, this discourse theory of institutions adopts a Foucauldian (1977) perspective on power, in claiming that “when practices are institutionalized. . . subject positions tend to privilege dominant field incumbents who support the status quo; and bodies of knowledge tend to ‘construct’ practices as effective, beneficial, appropriate, inevitable, and so on (i.e. as unproblematic)” (p. 151). The premise displayed here is that discourses change through the actions that derive from relations of power, and that the production of texts that challenge existing practices also “build a case for abandonment” (p. 151). Also important is that these new texts can be *outsider-driven*. That is, actors external to a particular institutional field can produce texts with an intentionality towards the disruption of a power relationship within the field, without directly interacting with, or even being aware of, particular individual or collective actors within an institutional field. Connecting this discussion to one of our earlier concepts, Maguire and Hardy (2009) propose that *deinstitutionalization* involves *translation*, or “how problematizations — claims. . . generic

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<sup>22</sup> Phillips, et al's. model is actually considerably more complex than I describe here. For the purpose of this dissertation, it is enough to understand that texts are appropriated through sensemaking and legitimation.

<sup>23</sup> This passage cites Davis, Diekmann, & Tinsley, 1994; Farjoun, 2002, Ahmadjian & Robinson, 2001, p. 621.

rational myths, . . . and other forms of ideas<sup>24</sup> — do not diffuse intact and unchanged through a field but are transformed as actors read a text and interpret the problematizations that it contains” (p. 151). Thus, we see that translations are invoked whenever actors external to the institutional field<sup>25</sup> intentionally attempt to change the meaning of particular texts, such that a practice may become abandoned.

Since humans are the assumed agents of deinstitutionalization in these theories, let us re-examine institutional work from an organizational discourse perspective. Institutional work was defined earlier as the “creation, maintenance, and disruption of institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. xx). Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca (2009) subsequently expanded on this concept by highlighting the role of *intentionality* in the agency of institutional work. In this view, intentionality may be connected to institutions when viewed from three relational perspectives on agency as described by Emirbayer and Mische (1998). Those perspectives include: (1) *projective*, in which the intentionality of agency is future-oriented, (2) *practical*, in which it is oriented towards present problems, and (3) *habit*, through which it is oriented towards recall, selection, and application. These temporal configurations of intentionality and agency subsequently guide actors in accomplishing the three modes of institutional work: the modes of creation and disruption may be associated with projective intentionality, and the mode of maintenance with practical and habitual intentionalities (Lawrence, et al., 2009).

Although institutional work was not originally conceptualized with the concerns of discourse in mind, this understanding of intentionality adds to our understanding of sensemaking and legitimation as reflexive performances by institutional actors. That is, the study of the

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<sup>24</sup> Citing Latour, 1986, Zilber, 2006, Czarniawska & Jeorges, 1996.

<sup>25</sup> One might note Maguire and Hardy’s institutional field is a somewhat reified version of DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) organizational field.

intentionality of institutional work “highlights how and why actors work to *interpret, translate, transpose, edit, and recombine* institutions, and how those actions lead to unintended adaptations, mutations, and other institutional consequences” (Lawrence et al., 2011, p. 55, emphasis mine). Here, the use of words like “interpret, translate, etc.” assumes that actors are engaged in the textual work of production, selection, and repetition of discourses and their component texts. Isomorphism that is developed in the institutional field through processes of coercion, mimesis, and normativity, may now be understood as the expression of intentionality among actors. Organizational actors intending to introduce or change regulating texts understand that coercion may be a necessary component in the design of institutions (Ostrom, 1995). As well, environmentalists opposing the use of pesticides know that representing knowledge in conferences needs to be conducted in a language of science, in order to influence the related institutional field (Hardy & Maguire, 2010). Thus, according to Phillips et al. (2004), the intentionality of institutional work will always involve the production and distribution of texts, since this work requires actors to maintain, create, or disrupt the relationships between texts. Thus, we may appreciate how intertextuality and interdiscursivity are not merely abstract factors influencing institutionalization. Instead, *we must study how these processes of (de)institutionalization manifest through the intentional use of texts by organizational members.*

Our discussion of intentionality thus far has avoided engaging the co-constructed aspect of communication as a performance, and of how “any performance will never be reducible to the way it was intended or meant by its producer” (Cooren et al., 2011, p. 1152). As Cornelissen, et al. (2015) interpret that claim in terms of communicative institutionalism, “the joint cognitive understandings and meanings that emerge (in ongoing fashion) from communication are unlikely to be isomorphic with the original intentions of the multiple participants engaged in it” (p. 14;

see also Maguire & Hardy, 2010). That is, the effects of institutional work — the (cognitive) meanings that participants (dis)agree on in discourse — are indeterminate, because isomorphism is never perfect, due to the competing influences of other actors (and their texts) within the field who are also engaging in institutional work. As a result, I propose that the resulting texts should be considered *hybrids* (see Ashcraft 2001; 2006), and that their analysis must engage the contradictions, paradoxes and dialectical tensions that emerge wherever discourses collide (Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016).

Maguire and Hardy's (2010) study of the Stockholm Convention on Pesticide provides a useful case that shows how these concepts operate empirically. Much of the institutional work studied in this case was conducted through a series of international conferences, where participants would engage in purposive institutional work. Texts and their meanings were produced and consumed through both formal and informal gatherings of participants in conversation. A particularly important and contentious object of discourse was the chemical DDT. The resulting texts that came to be called the "Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants," was a hybrid product that somehow failed to include DDT among a list of "eliminated" chemicals; its classification was instead included among "restricted" products to be regulated. Despite the intention of some of the convention's authors to ban DDT outright, the resulting text was a compromise produced through interactions across three different *discursive spaces* identified in the data: plenary speak, corridor talk, and external communication. Each of these spaces (or genres) had different rules pertaining to who could speak and in what manner, which included the types of text that were produced and distributed. Plenary speak used conference papers delivered to large audiences. Corridor talk consisted of more intimate exchanges of position papers, brochures, videos, slideshows, and conversations, that suggested

different wordings for the resulting legal text. And external communication consisted of “press releases, journal articles, media reports, and websites” (p. 1373). In terms of text production and distribution, each discursive space had different purposes (or intentions); plenary speak produced a formal text; texts in corridor talk was meant to influence and persuade; while external communication was addressed to the wider public of scientists and policy-makers outside of the meetings. While Hardy and Maguire (2010) do not directly engage with texts as actors, it is clear that the texts function here as embodiments of different discourses in interaction meant to influence actors in the institutional field. The intertextual and interdiscursive connections and resulting actions thus established a formal text that also re-shaped the institutional field, which included changes to positions (of actors), understanding (meanings of texts), and an alignment of rules concerning DDT (isomorphism). Although Maguire and Hardy were primarily interested here in studying the role of narratives (as texts) in institutional work, the study highlights many of the concepts discussed above.

A similar narrative of hybridity could be constructed in the case of Ashcraft’s (2006) study of a feminist organization. In this case, tensions emerged as some volunteer workers felt uncomfortable with the overly doctrinal discourse on feminism espoused by the organization’s founders. Institutional work was evidenced in the members’ production of a text — a policy list of “non-negotiables” — meant to regulate members’ understanding of the feminist principles of the organization. The document was revisited from time to time as a problem resolution device, which did little to actually solve the tensions between competing discourses. But the study does illustrate two points: (1) that institutional work is a constant struggle among organizational members, and (2) through discourse, competing texts are constructed or reconstituted in a hybridized authoritative version that comes to represent a set of organizational values. In this



chapter's final section, I will connect these points to our specific concern with indigenous PO work.

### **Indigenous PO Work as Purposive Institutional Work**

Our discussion of institutional work and the construction of hybridized texts returns us to an earlier critique of intentionality and rational-choice models. Specifically, what Cleaver (2002) calls *institutional bricoleurs* is, for our purposes, practically equivalent to the *institutional work* performed in an institutional field of organizations devoted to environmentalism, development, and forestry. This field necessarily includes forestry scientists, grant funding international agencies, national and local governments, development economists, and alliances among indigenous advocacy organizations. The institutional work that POs perform involves negotiating the construction and meanings of texts in order to intentionally disrupt other texts that sustain colonial institutional power relations. This institutional work involving the construction and meanings of texts, therefore, includes the practices of translation and dialogue, which become visible as our analysis attends to the ongoing production and interpretation of texts. Let us now conclude by considering the intertextual play of human and textual actors in the institutional field influenced by the Regalian doctrine.

### **The Regalian Doctrine as a Case Study**

Here, we may recall Lynch's (2005) characterization of the Regalian doctrine as the "original sin of Philippine jurisprudence" (Chapter 1), which was originally written into the consciousness of colonial administrators sometime in the 16th Century. The original interpretations of land use and policy, through the Regalian Doctrine, has subsequently been handed down through different national-level administrations -- American in 1898, then Filipino in 1946 -- with the originary authors long since deceased. We also see how the durability of this

institution was developed both through its maintenance in repeated and consistent interpretation, and also how actors have attempted — with limited success — to circumvent it through institutional work.

Lynch (2005) describes the construction of alternative postcolonial texts that POs had a part in crafting, such as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 and the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1991. Despite their influence, sections of these laws continue to be problematic due to their relationship with the original Regalian doctrine. The land rights of all indigenous groups became recognized through the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources was fully responsible for implementing the law. This agency promptly organized all existing programs in a single Community-Based Forest Management Office, through an executive order issued by the Philippine president. The results, as described by Lynch (2005), included:

The order established a procedure for delineating and provisionally recognizing the ancestral-domain claims of indigenous forest-dependent communities. Once their area was delineated, indigenous communities received Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADCs), which were issued to individuals. Both tenure instruments provide documentary evidence of indigenous property rights, but they recognize only claims. By mid-1998, nearly 2.7 million hectares were covered by CADCs, or nearly 10 percent of the nation's total land mass. Under IPRA, the CADCs are to be converted into Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles, a process that remains excruciatingly slow as of 2003 (p. 406).

The important point to this account is not the slow bureaucratic process of converting claims into titles, but that the Regalian doctrine continues to be the guiding principle of

recognizing titles that are legally enforceable through the alienating processes of state issued titles (i.e., in offering certificates of title as support to claims). In this fashion, the historical text of the land-claim (or “land-grab” if you wish) made by Ferdinand Magellan on behalf of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in 1521, continues on in a hybridized guise of a law crafted through institutional work by the very descendants of those originally dispossessed. In effect, participating organizations in this case constructed a meaning of indigenous property norms, through the dialogic production and translation of texts, that produced change favoring the interests of indigenous groups. Yet, in order to gain legitimacy, the hybridized text was required to maintain the Regalian concepts of claims and titles. Despite the shift in meaning of an object of discourse such as “title,” the resulting hybrid text continues to recognize the primacy of the state to issue such titles. As Lynch (2005) observes, current laws maintain the Regalian doctrine and its Westernized understanding of land tenure based as opposed to the highly nuanced and local meanings

Interpreting the details of Lynch’s (2005) account helps to reveal the tensions inherent to this sort of institutional work, as such texts became operational in the Philippines. Viewed from the analytical stance developed in this dissertation, those new laws represent hybrid texts, produced through an imperfect isomorphism in the institutional field. The intentions that indigenous peoples organizations originally had in the construction of the text, collided with the continuing historical authority of the Regalian doctrine, as it influences the institutional work done on the behalf of organizational actors invested in maintaining that doctrine. Or in other terms, the coercive isomorphism of the doctrine is a testament to its historical authority.

### Research Questions on PO Institutional Work

I return here to the initial general question I posed in Chapter 1; “*How do POs communicatively perform institutional work while negotiating tensions associated with the development of forest-related knowledge and policy?*” In this section, I apply some of these concepts discussed above to refine that general concern into more specific research questions.

In the discussion on text and hybridization, while there is evidence that translation is a feature of dialogic encounters among actors (Philipps, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004; MaGuire & Hardy, 2009). Translation and dialogue as copresent phenomena, are locations for the production of hybridized texts through human/text relationships. Especially in the indigenous PO setting this data has been gathered in, it is worth asking:

*RQ1: How do practices of dialogue and translation create hybridized indigenous texts?*

It had also been suggested that discursive tensions provide an impetus for organizational actors to engage in institutional work. Tensions are through feelings of discomfort, Negotiating these tensions through dialogic events is part of the regular work that POs must accomplish in the construction of hybridized texts.

*RQ2: How do indigenous POs negotiate discursive tensions in projecting the authority of hybridized indigenous texts?*

Texts become authoritative as they become deauthored and project organizational structures and understandings across time and space. The Ragalian doctrine’s assumptions about land use and forest management is contained in hybridized form in the texts of official laws, policies, and directives. These texts influence forestry policy that has also been promoting the decentralization of forestry management through indigenous groups. In attempting to influence

official texts, indigenous POs need to project their own understandings of indigenous concepts in new constructions of authoritative texts of CBFM.

*RQ3: How do indigenous POs project their interests through the intertextuality between competing authoritative texts in the institutional field of Community Based Forestry Management?*

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have placed several theories of institutions into conversation. While rational-choice theories provided us with an entry into questioning the ontology and politics of colonial text, they do not provide the critical ammunition necessary to support indigenous POs engaged in discursive practices that can advocate for better forestry management through the recognition of indigenous property rights. Alternately, the institutional field surrounding those practices and rights can be better understood by analyzing isomorphic processes in terms of organizational discourse and the production of texts. While one cannot isolate an institutional field for observation, one can observe the communicative micropractices of particular organizational texts and discursive events that constitute the field and make its isomorphic practices evident in and through discourse.

In the next chapter, I describe an ethnographic project

The KEF itself is not simply an organization interacting in dialogue with other organizations. The organization embodies the ideals of a population of people whose identity is threatened through threats to its forest. The profound effects of discourse, while not fully intended or immediately apparent in their founding conversations, can still create downstream effects. Although these secondary effects are difficult to anticipate (i.e., isomorphism is often

imperfect), increasing the likelihood that indigenous texts may gain authority is a worthwhile endeavor. NGO members should thus better understand the possibilities for textual reconstruction that an attention to discourse might provide.

Pursuing these normative commitments requires the collection and analysis of data drawn from communicational events associated with the NGO performance of institutional work. In the next chapter (Chapter 3), I describe an ethnographic project devoted to eliciting accounts and observing the practices of an indigenous–advocacy NGO located in the Philippines.

### Chapter 3

#### A Critical Ethnographic Methodology: Reflections on the Site, the Participants, and the Researcher Role

*“This is where it all began” my guide tells me. We are looking down on the upland valley of Malico. A tapestry of neat agricultural plots of rice and vegetables covers the valley floor, intermingled with one-story concrete structures. Where the ground begins to slope up the plots transform into kaingins<sup>26</sup> (swiddens) of sayote. Here, the trellis-supported vines form a soft blanket climbing up to the mid-slope of the mountain range across from us. Above the sayote is a mixed forest of fruit trees and tropical hardwoods. Among them, I can recognize mango, guyabano, and guava mingled with narra and alnus (alder). Above the mixed forest and extending further up the slopes of Mount Imugan is virgin dipterocarp (broadleaf) forest, part of the Kalahan reserve. These trees appear more uniform and are known to me by their Tagalog names: lauan, guiyo, yakal, mayapis, and they all share a similar desirability as lumber as a resource for lowland corporations.*

The beginning my guide is referring to in the vignette was an attempted land-grab of territory inhabited by Kalanguya speaking people, by persons from Manila associated with the notorious Imelda Marcos in the late 1960s. The story I pieced together from various accounts by

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<sup>26</sup> “Kaingin” is a Tagalog word but is widely used to describe the upland agricultural practices of upland tribes. This is usually translated into English as “swidden,” although that is a much broader term for similar, but not identical practices among different people, indigenous or otherwise, across the globe. In the Ikalahan-Kalanguya practice (as well as with other Cordilleran people), kaingin is a practice of rotating agriculture where a field is left fallow for a number of years after its productivity has declined, and then burned to release nutrients from the soil. The practice is described more in more detail in Chapter 4.

different informants can be summarized as this: Developers with soldiers from the Philippine military showed up in Malico with documents of eviction. They declared that the valley would be developed into a so-called “Marcos City” as an alternative vacation spot to the already overpopulated Baguio City. The indigenous Ikalahan-Kalanguya were ready to fight with the military, but the elders thought it wiser to consult with a local missionary in the neighboring barangay of Imugan — Delbert Rice. Reverend Rice was pastor to many of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya people in the area surrounding Imugan. He suggested that mounting legal opposition through Philippine courts would be a better strategy to contest the land-grab. Using his social resources and political connections through the United Church of Christ, and with the *pro-bono* legal work and advice from a sympathetic local lawyer, the Ikalahan-Kalanguya elders prepared their case and trooped to Manila to meet with different government offices. At the time, the nation’s Bureau of Forestry Development (BFD) was also dealing with the problem of protecting its forests from illegal logging. With not enough manpower to police the Kalahan, the bureau struck a deal in 1973 with the Ikalahan-Kalanguya elders to perform forestry management for them in exchange for exclusive rights to occupy the land. The management agreement, the famous Memorandum of Agreement Number 1 (MOA #1), served to lease the forest to the newly formed Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF) for twenty five years. This agreement became the basis for other forestry management agreements that influenced indigenous peoples rights in the Philippines to the present.

This story of the formation of the KEF displays many of the discourses identified through my six month ethnographic work with the KEF and the Ikalahan-Kalanguya people. Several



specific discourses were prominent in the dialogic<sup>27</sup> events I observed, namely: *agroforestry*, *indigeneity*, *governance*, and *land tenure*. I identified these discourses through my analysis of fieldnotes, interviews, and documents that all emerged in a series of dialogues that I participated in. These dialogues included the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF), national, and municipal government organizations. For the purposes of this study, most important among these national offices were the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP). Also important were officials of the Municipality of Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, and its component barangays.

The common object that unifies these discourses is The Kalahan Forest. In different ways, each discourse depicts how both the Ikalahan-Kalanguya people and national political agencies value the forest from different perspectives. Tracing how these dialogues reveal interdiscursive relationships as artifacts of institutional work, guides the remainder of this dissertation.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide important context about this research project, including descriptions of the site, the ethnographic methods employed, and the texts (both as documents and ritual) that constitute the institutional field surrounding the Kalahan Forest. In the following sections, I will describe here: (1) the site in terms of its organization, participants, geography, and locations of dialogic events, (2) the ethnographic methods, the number and character of observations, interviews, and documents collected. I begin below with a description of the organization that forms the object of this study, including the geographic, cultural, and political contexts under which it operates.

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<sup>27</sup> Recalling Chapter 1, “dialogic” refers to the polyvocal character of conversation (Bakhtin, 2010). Anderson, Baxter & Cissna (2003) define dialogue as conversations where participants realize a profound mutual awareness of each others difference.

**The Site: The Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF), Barangay Imugan, Kalanguya  
Culture, and Santa Fe**

In this section, I provide a description of the KEF, including its organizational structure as well as the historical, cultural, and political features of the community, which influence the dialogic events that I explore in later chapters. These features do not necessarily, frequent, or directly enter discourse; instead, they form part of the tacit knowledge referenced by participants during those events.

The political relationship of the municipality of Santa Fe with the Ikalahan-Kalanguya community is complicated by the fact that many of the municipal officials, including the councilors, are also themselves members of Ikalahan-Kalanguya tribe. As a result, Kalanguya culture and the geography of the Caraballo mountains uniquely (and extensively) influence the organizational discourses that I discuss in later chapters. For those reasons I will preview them here. In the following sections, I describe in turn: (1) the geographical, historical, and cultural significance of my primary site of Barangay Imugan, (2) Kalanguya cultural features, and (3) the historical and organizational development of the KEF as an indigenous people's organization.

**Geographic, Historical, and Cultural Significance of Barangay Imugan**

*The bus I am riding bravely descends through Dalton Pass<sup>28</sup>, zig-zagging  
down (what seem to me) precarious switchbacks. On the outer curbs of the road,  
the Kalahan Forest often appears as I notice, bathed in clouds, the rich,  
saturated, dark green of the dipterocarps<sup>29</sup> that constitute the Kalahan. Winding*

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<sup>28</sup> Dalton Pass is also shown as Balete Pass in some maps. Its highest point marks the boundary between the provinces of Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya.

<sup>29</sup> Taxonomically, dipterocarps are various genera of the family *Dipterocarpaceae*. The tallest of these reach over 90m in height and are the predominant type of trees in tropical forest. The Kalanguya term "Kalahan" may be literally translated as "dipterocarp forest."

*further downhill, the town of Santa Fe comes into view. I signal the bus driver to stop across the street from the municipal hall. I had been told that buses do not normally stop here on their way down towards the Cagayan Valley. The Poblacion of Santa Fe seems relatively quiet, its concrete structures mostly government buildings that rise up some meters up the mountainside. Just behind the Poblacion is a mixed forest that climbs steeply upwards to join the Kalahan forest.*

*I negotiate with a tricycle driver to get me to Imugan. “Where in Imugan? At the Centro?” I reply “yes” as I squeeze myself into the garishly decorated sidecar. We slowly wind up the road, the tricycle engine struggling noisily along the steeper grades as we follow the Santa Fe river gorge. As the tricycle climbs, I see the rich tropical Kalahan Forest climbing upwards towards the mountain peaks. Finally, the tricycle makes a sharp right and the road flattens as we drive past substantial concrete houses that punctuate the road. Along the way, I see a bright-green church set back from the road with a sign reading “United Church of Christ in the Philippines” (UCCP). A few meters later, we stop alongside a two story building with signs indicating that we are at Imugan.*

Barangay<sup>30</sup> Imugan in the municipality of Santa Fe (Figure 3.1) is of significant importance to this study. My primary geographical area of research was within the barangays accessible by public transportation to Santa Fe Poblacion<sup>31</sup>. These barangays include Poblacion, Baracbac, Malico, Bacneng, Tactac, Sinapaoan, and of course, Imugan. While the entire

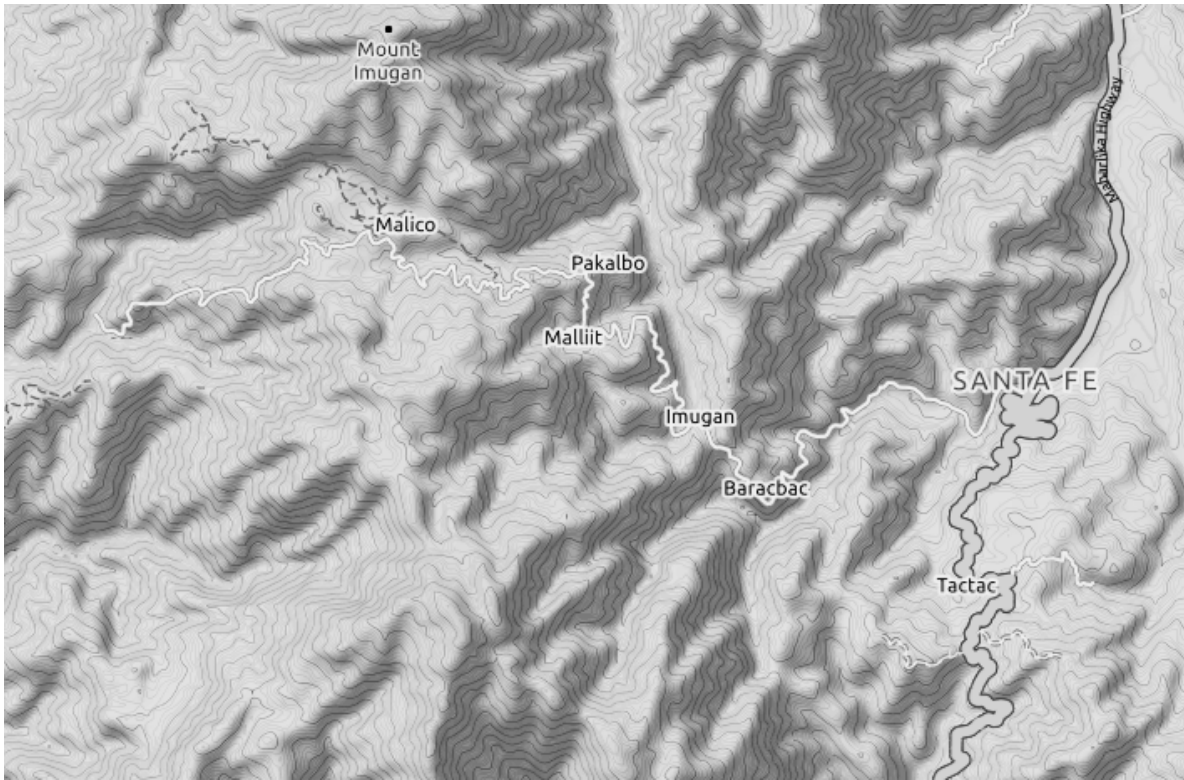
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<sup>30</sup> The term “barangay” refers to the smallest political unit of the Philippine government system. The relationship between the barangay and the KEF is discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>31</sup> In the Philippine political system, municipalities are composed of “barangays,” which translate loosely as “villages.” It is typical for the barangay where the municipal government is centered to be called “Poblacion.”

ancestral domain of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya covers a much wider area, Imugan might be considered its “capital.” Imugan is where the KEF maintains its offices. The KEF office, with its archives of board of trustees minutes that proved so invaluable to this study, is located in a school building within the Kalahan Academy grounds. The covered basketball court on the academy grounds is also one location for the various dialogues documented in my fieldnotes. Dialogues in Imugan Centro are also held in the open market area beneath the barangay offices, on the grounds of the UCCP Mission House, and the KEF Dagway Training Center. The last location hosted the most significant dialogic events that I describe in the chapters that follow. Each of these dialogues involved members of the wider Ikalahan-Kalanguya community with, elders travelling many hours to reach these locations.

Imugan is not a large place, but it is historically and culturally significant, especially in the history of Nueva Vizcaya and Philippine Community Forestry. Prior to the Philippine Congressional bill passed in 1959 (RA 2178) that changed its name to the present one, the Municipality of Santa Fe was known as the Municipality of Imugan. The “Imugen [sic] area” is also mentioned in archives of the Spanish colonial administration dating back to the 17th Century (Scott, 1974, p. 83). Throughout that period, the Villa Verde trail that passed through Imugan was used by friars and conquistadors to bring the word of Christ, as well as to collect gold from the tribes located further inland (Scott, 1974). The present Santa Fe to San Nicolas road that started construction in 2014 re-traces that older dirt path (see Figure 1). The trail and its surrounding ridges formed a battle line between the US 32nd Infantry Division and the remnants of the Japanese forces under General Yamashita in the closing weeks of World War II (Carlisle, 1945). Imugan Falls, a little over one kilometer from Imugan Centro, is a popular tourist destination. There is also a famous, widely-grown variety of ginger whose popular name is



*Figure 3.1: Map showing the geographic area where most of the data was gathered*

“imugan” from this area where it was developed, which is sometimes referred to as “native ginger” even though that plant is an introduced species.

The geography of these mountain ranges help define the municipality of Santa Fe, as well as the province of Nueva Vizcaya in general. The province is almost entirely mountainous, being bounded by the Cordillera range to the West, the Caraballo range to the South, and the Sierra Madre range to the East. Santa Fe is the first significant settlement after Dalton Pass on the way North to the Cagayan Valley. From any vantage point at the Santa Fe Poblacion, the Kalahan forest is never far away. North of Santa Fe, the land flattens out as the Santa Fe river flows down towards the provincial capital of Bayombong. The municipalities bordering Santa Fe, Kayapa,

Aritao, and Caranglan (province of Nueva Ecija) are all also within these mountain ranges.

Without these forested mountains, lowland communities would quickly lose water for irrigation.

Barangays and municipalities (and specifically Imugan and Santa Fe accordingly) are prominent political features of my fieldnotes, and these need to be explained in order to finalize the context of Santa Fe and Imugan, from which significant amounts of data were drawn.

Despite its cultural importance, politically, Imugan is just one among sixteen barangays that compose the municipality of Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. Barangays, which translate loosely as “villages,” are the smallest political unit in the Philippine political system, which combine into the larger units of the more familiar municipalities and provinces. Unlike the larger political units, which were introduced by colonialism, the barangay is an indigenous concept that the Spanish colonizers appropriated found useful when ruling lowland communities. A common feature of all of the units within this political scale is that each has an elected chief executive alongside an elected law-making and consultative body composed of councilors (*kagawad*). At the barangay level, the eight members of the barangay council (*sangguniang barangay*), meet regularly and in committees to create ordinances and to advise the barangay captain (*punong barangay*, sometimes also called barangay chair). Each barangay maintains a “Centro” where the barangay hall maintains its offices. The Centro is often and unofficially further divided into neighborhoods (*purok*). More distant neighborhoods away from the Centro are typically called *sitios*. Barangays also typically maintain an unarmed security officers called *barangay tanods*. The barangay captain is typically the first authority that neighbors appear before in order to settle disputes.

At the municipal level, a similar organizational structure applies; there is an executive (*alkalde* or mayor) and consultative body (*sangguniang bayan*). Significantly, mayors have

armed police forces at their disposal.<sup>32</sup> This feature makes the mayor significantly important to the people within a municipality.

Barangays and municipalities have their share of tensions in relation to the indigeneity of the Kalanguya. Barangay officials are elected during regular elections held at different times from other elections, although barangays are apolitical by design and officials do not belong to political parties. However, one elder I interviewed complained to me that political parties were also courting individuals in Imugan, which he fears will become a divisive force among the Ikalahan-Kalanguya. Also, many barangay captains are also Kalanguya elders, which is another source discursive tension. As well, most municipal employees, as well as councilors, are also members of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya community. I discuss these tensions between traditional (elders) and formal (barangay and municipal governmental) structures of authority further in Chapter 5.

Although the geography of these mountains defines many features of the area, they also partly define the Kalanguya identity and culture. The cultural distinctions between “lowlanders” (generally Ilocanos and Tagalogs) and “uplanders” help the identity of all the mountain tribes that populate these mountains. These distinctions become important when the Kalanguya discuss their identity in relation to the politics and culture during the dialogic events I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5. In the next subsection, I discuss specific aspects of Kalanguya culture that help to provide further context to the discourses on indigeneity and authority in the next chapters.

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<sup>32</sup> Nominally, these police report up a chain of command through the Philippine National Police. But according to the rules of the Department of the Interior and Local Governments, Mayors have authority to direct police towards specific actions.

## **Kalanguya Culture and Language in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya**

*I am at the basketball court at the market area of Santa Fe Poblacion. A crowd is observing the performance of a ritual celebration during the annual Kalanguya Festival. The Mayor (a non-indigenous woman) and Vice-mayor (an indigenous Kalanguya man) are sitting on chairs. Their function in this ritual is to represent a host couple that called for this ritual to be held. Eight pigs were tied and brought into the center of the circle. The pigs are mature (not piglets), mostly with black skin though one was white and a couple were mottled. They are large, a meter and a half long and must have weighed more than a human. There are dances and rituals that surround the pigs. Pairs of dancers, one male and one female, circle the pigs, and after three circuits, the audience chants in unison “Oohhwaayy, Aahhaaayy, Whooh! Whooh!”<sup>33</sup>. After a few more circuits are completed they repeat the chant “Oohhwaayy, Aahhaaayy, Whooh! Whooh!” this time signalling that a new pair of dancers must come forward.*

*After several pairs have finished their dances, groups of two or three men with sharp, wooden stakes approach each pig and proceed to stab a stake into the pigs’ hearts in order to let them die. The smell of blood is in the air as the pigs bleed to death on the concrete floor. Thankfully, most of the pigs stopped squealing in a few seconds. One pig, a large black one, is stubborn and refuses to die, taking more than a minute to stop squealing. An elder, taking the role of a traditional priest, blesses each of the pigs and touches them to gather blood. He*

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<sup>33</sup> This is the rendering of the chant as suggested to me by one informant.



*then approaches the Mayor and Vice-mayor and anoints their foreheads with the blood.*

*After the dancing, we begin to feast on fried innards, boiled pork, fried camote (sweet potato), leafy sayote tops, and tapuy (rice wine). As we eat, a municipal janitor brings a mop to clean the blood on the concrete basketball court.*

On its surface, this vignette illustrates how the use of pigs -- and their blood -- is important to the Kalanguya culture. Pigs represent wealth, and so they are used to determine penalties as imposed by the elders for offenses. *Kanyao* are a variety of ritual feasts held on special occasions such as weddings, performed to treat illnesses, or simply to share food and drink during social gatherings. These social events could be a *tongtongan* (a discussion held among elders; discussed further in Chapter 5) where pigs serve as payment of a fine, a barangay assembly, or almost any other community gathering where some sort of discussion takes place. Important events, such as festivals and gatherings of multiple communities include dances with the use of traditional instruments such as gongs. More deeply, then, the Kalanguya use of rituals is consciously pre-colonial and meant to establish and display their indigeneity to outsiders.

Although the Kalanguya have a common culture, their language varies geographically into three dialects, and their identity is not cohesive. This is partly because the more distant Kalanguya do not normally maintain contact with the communities in Santa Fe. For example, one informant revealed to me that the translation of the Bible into Kalanguya represents a compromise achieved among speakers of different dialects. Even within the Santa Fe communities, there had also been controversy over what cultural members call themselves: Ikalahan or Kalanguya. One elder I spoke to, who in his youth had served as an anthropological

research assistant and translator to Pastor Rice, believes that the Kalanguya and the Ikalahan are distinct groups that share a common language; “Don’t go into their area alone or you might come back without a head!” he warned me. Others conflate the two identifiers. Although that issue was resolved by combining both terms into “Ikalahan-Kalanguya,” *how* that was accomplished remains confusing (e.g. some NCIP records and presentations they refer to the tribe as “Kalanguya/Ikalahan”). Based on my data, the most frequently used name, both to the group and to outsiders, is “Kalanguya.” I noticed this preference early on when one non-indigenous jeepney driver declared to me, “You know what the problem with the Kalanguya is? They are too shy.” Thus, throughout this dissertation, I use the term *Ikalahan-Kalanguya* to specifically refer to the people in Imugan and neighboring barangays that the KEF represents in outside forums. When speaking about their culture and languages in general, I use the term *Kalanguya*.

Like many other Cordillera indigenous groups, the Kalanguya political structure is flat; they have neither titles, permanent political positions, or bureaucracy. They have no *datus* (chiefs); and no elder is more important than any other. Elders practice governance through open, public dialogues where solutions to problems are formulated by consensus. Elders also stand as judges during *tongtongans*, charging penalties in the form of, typically, pigs or other livestock. Some elders are so well regarded that they are invited by neighboring communities to contribute their wisdom. The elder I call Crispin in the following chapters is one of these. I once saw him at the Santa Fe poblacion waiting for a jeepney. When I asked him where he was going, he mentioned that there was a tongtongan in Bacneng he was invited to attend. I discuss the role of elders and the tongtongan more thoroughly in Chapter 5. At this point suffice it to say that this lack of formal political structure generates discursive tensions during interactions with more formal political units such as the municipal government.

Traditionally, a subsistence economy defined the Kalanguya relationship with the forest land. Their food supply was produced through the practices of shifting agriculture, cultivation of small vegetable plots, and hunting. They are expert hunters; as one elder related to me, in his youth he could leave home in the morning and return with a deer by mid-day. Many an elder attaches his bolo to a traditional backpack made from deer hide. The importance of their traditional food practices will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Needless to say, Kalanguya culture has been Westernizing for some time. The present Kalanguya culture is hybridized; a Westernized veneer covers an indigeneity that is still present. During the display of rituals I describe in the opening vignette of this section, many of the participants wore short pants underneath their loincloths. One elder recited a ritual chant into a microphone wearing a Fedora hat. When not using his wristwatch to check the time, an elder might use his smartphone, which he also uses to comment on Facebook. A Kalanguya person today might have a college degree from a Philippine university. Younger Kalanguya are more likely to seek professions such as nurses or teachers.

Present day Kalanguya are formally Christian, even as their traditional rituals perform a pre-Christian past. Following decades of missionary work in their community, they have transformed into a people more likely to wear t-shirts rather than their traditional black-and-red woven vests and loincloths, which are now reserved for display during cultural festivals. I was told a story about one man in Imugan who had resisted conversion to Christianity early in Pastor Rice's missionary work. Once converted, he abandoned his traditional clothing for the shirts and pants he thought of as modern (Western). On seeing him dressed that way, Pastor Rice told him that he didn't have to change his clothes just because he was now a Christian. The man

rationalized this action, replying “I actually like these new clothes better; it’s easier now to chase after my cattle when they wander too far.”

Stories such as the one above hint at the extent that the Kalanguya have hybridized their traditions with Western culture. This hybridization is most apparent in their language. Any Kalanguya wishing a career apart from swidden farming must be conversant in four languages. Among themselves, the Kalanguya speak their own language. When doing business either in Santa Fe or in farther towns down the river, the language used is the Northern Luzon *lingua franca* of Ilocano. When bureaucrats from Manila are in town, they speak the national-scale language, Tagalog.

Most important though is English. This use of English is not merely a colonial holdover; it is often a strategic choice. The Ikalahan-Kalanguya, through the KEF, maintain relationships with foreign funding institutions such as the USAID. The archive of KEF board meetings is written in English. As a matter of policy, the KEF maintains both traditional and Westernized aspects of their culture, which often come into tension when placed in dialogue with external agencies. The discourse producing this dialectical tension will be elaborated in Chapter 4. Meanwhile, I describe the KEF in more detail in the section that follows.

### **The Organization of the Kalahan Educational Foundation**

*The KEF board meeting is coming to a close. I accompany the Chairman outside to a tree where he retrieves his cellphone. I initiate an ethnographic interview by asking him, “I noted down that you do not have any voting.”*

*“No, we don’t vote,” he replies.*

*I inquire further, “So how do you make decisions?”*

*“We keep the discussion going until everyone agrees,” he says with a smile.*

*We walk together to the Kalahan Academy grounds. The single-story, concrete school buildings are set in terraces that climb up the mountainside. and into the KEF office as he waves at the principal and school staff snacking on potato chips.*

*A steel barrel is filling with water that travels down a rubber hose emerging from the forest above us. I return to the office, a relatively small space with three desks and a chair for visitors. On the wall hang certificates of various awards given to the KEF. Dividing the desk of the accountant and that of the KEF Executive Director, is a set of bound volumes in a bookcase that comes up to my waist. Each volume is labelled “Minutes of Board Meetings.” The Executive Director is at his desk, tapping on a laptop computer translating his notes into minutes. Through the window behind his desk, I can see the forest.*

In the vignette above, I show the KEF as a Westernized organization that nonetheless maintains a close relationship with the forest. The KEF is considered a success story in community-based forestry by the Food and Agricultural Office (FAO) of the United Nations, as well as by various forestry studies (see Encarnacion, n.d.; Dolom & Serrano, 2005; Rice, 2001; Lasco et al., 2008; Dahal & Adhikari, 2008). They are an indigenous *people's organization* (PO), having been founded in 1973 by the elders of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya people as a response, initially, to the land-grab I described above. But the KEF has also been instrumental in opposing other threats such as mining, road construction, and the establishment of a telecommunications tower within the Kalahan forest.

Although the KEF has been managing the Kalahan forest reserve since 1973, their organization has also changed over time in line with a growing sense of possession and responsibility to the land. Although MOA#1 was a good example of the collaboration accomplished between indigenous communities and national government agencies, the agreement did not directly challenge the Regalian Doctrine — the legal principle in Philippine case law that justified ownership of forest lands by the national government. By the 1980s however, new ideas on extending the rights of indigenous people became part of the public discourse on forestry management. The KEF took the initiative in acquiring two Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADTs) composed of the 25 barangays in Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija that are predominantly Kalanguya.

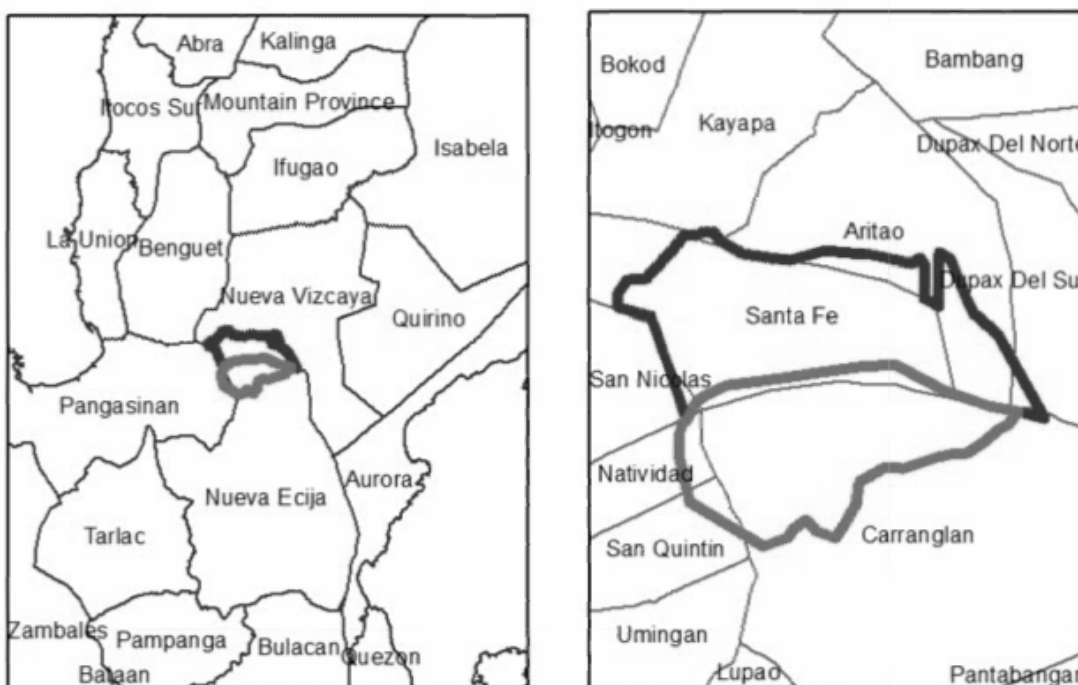
During the same period of their reaction to the land-grab, the elders in Imugan also worried about the encroachment of “lowland” (Westernizing) values on their culture and identity as an indigenous people. There were complaints that a new generation was growing up trained by the secular public education system. The younger Kalanguya were not learning their culture, or how to live harmoniously with the ecology of their ancestral domain. The elders’ solution was to add an educational component (thus the “E” in KEF) to the organization by operating a high school -- The Kalahan Academy -- that added two subjects to the standard curriculum required by the Department of Education: indigenous culture and ecology. And since the Kalanguya had no experience in running a school, the KEF hired an Ifugao schoolteacher to act as the high school’s first principal. As explained to me by one schoolteacher, ecology and indigenous cultural education are closely tied; Kalanguya cultural practices include ecologically friendly approaches to managing the forest, especially their traditional methods of kaingin.

In line with their mission to protect the Kalahan Forest, the Ikalahan-Kalanguya elders instituted rules that granted the KEF regulatory powers with the ability to fine individuals who break these rules. Managed through their Agroforestry Team, tree-cutting or field burning would now require a permit from the barangay based on their recommendation. A felled tree would now have to be replaced by planting a seedling. Fines are imposed in Philippine Pesos, a departure from traditional Kalanguya systems of justice based on livestock (see Chapters 4 and 5 for elaborations on this theme).

While many of these practices remain in place, the KEF has also been facing a different set of challenges sourced in the changing institutions that they helped to create. At the time I left the site, the KEF had been managing a number of activities that differ from their original conception in order to address new problems. Although the work of protecting the Kalahan forest and operating a high school continues, the original concept of an ecological and cultural advocacy organization has transformed the KEF into an organization that promotes alternative livelihood and political practices that are a further hybridization from traditional Kalanguya culture and political structures. This process of hybridization is seen in all of the discursive tensions I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5.

Part of the process of hybridization is the shift of the KEF from an advocacy organization into a economic and political one. In terms of staffing, practicalities from the past required expertise from outside the Kalanguya Community. Today, the foundation is currently completely managed and staffed by members of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya. The original MOA#1 was restricted strictly to forest lands, but since the passage of the IPRA in 1997, the KEF has also been instrumental in securing the land-tenure rights of the Kalanguya people to their ancestral domain. The KEF organized the necessary bureaucratic work for the Kalanguya people to

receive two Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADTs) issued by the NCIP under the indigenous people's rights act (see Dolom & Serrano, 2005; also see Figure 2). At the board of trustees level, whereas the original trustees were mostly Imugan elders, the current trustees are composed of eleven representatives selected by the different barangays that compose "Cluster 1," the five barangays that buttress Mount Imugan, on whose behalf the KEF acts as an advocacy organization.. These current trustees are younger, although an elder still sits as a board member. KEF quarterly board meetings take up most of one day; both meetings I attended began at 9:00 am and ended at nearly 4:00 pm. The communal spirit of the Kalanguya allows each speaker an equal voice so that agenda item discussions may take a long time to finish.



*Figure 3.2: Municipal and Provincial scale maps showing the Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT*  
*Left: Provincial scale map showing the location of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain.*  
*Right: Municipal scale map showing the ancestral domain. Image courtesy of KEF.*

Politically, the KEF is taking the lead role in organizing the two CADTs into five clusters of barangays. Each cluster maintains a specific PO and within this developing federation; the



KEF is nominally only one among five organizations that comprise the federation. The KEF director explained to me that although they have the knowledge to do so, they lack the capacity to regulate the ecology of their entire ancestral domain. Whereas in the past, and due to provisions within MOA#1, the KEF was managing the 14,730 hectares of the Kalahan Reserve<sup>34</sup>. Today, the total area covered under the two CADTs is 55,841 hectares and the KEF itself admits that they cannot manage this area without changing the political organization of the CADT. These issues will be explicated as a source of discursive tensions in Chapters 4 and 5.

### **The Interpretivist Epistemology that Guides this Study**

*The Santa Fe Environment Summit is finally underway as the presence of various organizations and individuals are acknowledged. People stand up as names are called out. The presence of the NCIP and DENR was noted, as well as the KEF. Barangay Captains from the sixteen barangays of Santa Fe were acknowledged. Former municipal officials, including the past Vice-Mayor, stand as their names are called. The MC announces that although the mayor of Santa Fe could not join us today, the chief administrative officer (often referred to as the “little Mayor”) together with other municipal staff are present. Finally, as has happened often in past observations, my presence as a “researcher from the US” was announced. Smiling, the KEF staff, elders, and community members who already know me look at me in acknowledgement.*

I cannot help but reflect on the “from the US” part of the vignette as I write this methodology. My presence and origin *had* to be acknowledged to justify my participation, even though this is a public event. While I cannot claim to wholly grasp the Kalanguya experience of

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<sup>34</sup> For a more complete description of the process of change, see Dolom & Serrano (2005).

the world, I more confidently understand the world of bureaucrats from Manila. As a person who speaks two of the languages used during this event — Tagalog and English — I had been exposed to the bureaucratic attitudes of government officials from the capital (Manila) throughout my professional career working in the business community. During another event, I had a good discussion with two officials from Manila, using the educated Tagalog/English codes the three of us were familiar with. Thus, any interpretivist claims I make must be understood as one generated by a “foreigner” to these mountain communities.

In the sections that follow, I describe an interpretive ethnographic approach that requires me to ask questions concerning my role as a visiting Filipino researcher who just happens to be from the US. I shall reserve more critical reflections concerning my role for the final chapter (Chapter 6) of this dissertation.

### **The need for interpretivism**

I begin this section by restating some of the arguments detailed in Chapter 2 from a methodological perspective. The development of neo-institutionalism in organizational studies was partly a reaction to the positivist epistemology assumed by the rational-choice models of institutional economics (Scott, 1995). The epistemology of rational-actor economics assumes a bounded rationality (Simon, 1982) that centers analysis on the constraints guiding individuals and their transactions (1995). This epistemology is reflected in the institutional economics of Ostrom (2015) that influenced later studies of natural resource management. Ostrom and her followers studied institutions by attempting to uncover variables regulating the rational choices that individuals make when managing resources (Ostrom, 1998; Wall, 2014). Critics of rational-choice models noted that these models were reductionist, and therefore too dependent on discovering enduring rules and structures, while also ignoring questions concerning the historical

formation of institutions and the influences of language and culture (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 1995).

Critiques from related fields suggest that interpretive approaches can provide a deeper understanding of the institutional basis for organizing the management of natural resources. In development studies, for example, Cleaver (2002) has critiqued assumptions concerning the unilinear evolution of institutions, and the simple dichotomies characterizing institutions (e.g. as weak vs. robust). She subsequently suggests that related concepts drawn from Ostrom (2015) — such as “design principles” — fail to “recognize the depth of social and cultural embeddedness of decision-making and co-operative relations” among indigenous groups (Cleaver, 2002, p. 28). Similarly, forestry researcher Banzon-Cabanilla (2011) suggests broadening the scientific scope of forestry research to include “interpretive/hermeneutic and transformational epistemologies,” in order to avoid overly-simplified dichotomies and attend to the worldviews of research participants. Invoking a broader set of concepts (not necessarily resource-based), related critiques in organizational studies have encouraged the study of cognitive, cultural, and linguistic aspects of interorganizational relationships in the formation of institutions (March & Olsen, 1989; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, Scott, 1995). In this process, neo-institutionalists have affiliated with theories such as the social constructionist understanding of institutions developed by Berger and Luckmann (1967), the practice theories of Pierre Bourdieu (1977), and structuration of Anthony Giddens (Giddens, 1979).

The influence of these theories has largely manifested in the development of an interpretivist epistemology, which has allowed organizational scholars to view institutions as entities composed of dynamic organizational practices and ideas that influence other organizations. The robustness and enduring qualities of institutionalized practices can

subsequently be examined through how actors form concepts of reality in ways that “define the ends and shape the means by which interests are determined and pursued” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, p. 28). In this way, attempting to make sense of actors’ meanings practically demands an interpretive approach. Interpretivism subsequently pays attention to actors’ ways of making sense of the world. While positivism views reality as singular, tangible, and external to the agent, interpretivism assumes that reality is a product of interaction among forms of human consciousness, thus treating multiple social realities as “unique, plural, simultaneous and local phenomena” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 8). Interpretivism has particularly influenced ethnographic methods that attempt to document and interpret cultures from native perspectives (Prasad, 2005). The role of the interpretivist researcher is to act as a subjective instrument of data production, working interdependently with participants, to inductively produce theories that are hermeneutically tested through ongoing interaction (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Thus, the study of institutions can benefit from an interpretive approach to examine not only actions of individual and collective agents, but also the sense-making role of the researcher who is also embedded, therefore influenced, by the actors in the field.

### **My role as interpreter in this postcolonial setting**

It is the role of the researcher-as-instrument that allows one to investigate situated social realities that have to contend with the lingering effects of colonial institutional texts and discourses present at the site. But simply producing interpretation is insufficient if we are to take seriously (in terms of methods) Broadfoot and Munshi’s (2013) call to decolonize communication knowledge.

My positionality here is nuanced by my personal background. As a person who incorporates a Spanish ethnic heritage with my Filipino citizenship, I found myself astride the

identities of colonizer and colonized. I spent the greater part of my life as a Filipino with a hyphen, constantly having to explain why an apparently Western person spoke Tagalog like a native. This was also true in Imugan when interviewing Kalanguya participants using the version of Tagalog from Manila, which most Filipinos can understand. Tagalog was the bridge that allowed me to shed the mask of the colonizer, up to a point. To those of us who come from a Westernized Manila, the world of the indigenous was as strange as it was familiar. The kanyao (feast) is a well known practice outside the Cordilleras, as are rice wine, imugan ginger, and the knitted fabrics that mountain people wear.

More difficult for me to come to terms with was the Christianity mixed with their pre-Christian traditions. To someone looking for a postcolonial condition, the acceptance of Protestant Christianity by the indigenous despite three centuries of attempts by Spanish Catholic friars can be puzzling. It was only late in my stay, when I began attending UCCP services in Imugan, that I began to understand the importance of Christian spirituality among the Kalanguya. Most of the Imugan elders attend the Bible study that precedes the one church service during the week. After services, the people mingle outside their small, bright-green church. Invariably, a stranger (like me) would be invited to a Sunday lunch by the family of an elder. If there is a postcolonial text among the Kalanguya that needs decolonizing, it would not be that of their Christian practices. As anthropologist Renato Rosaldo said of the neighboring Ilongots, bemoaning the loss of their oratory in favor of Christianity would be a form of imperialist nostalgia. I can say the same for these Kalanguya, who have come to consider me a friend.

In other words, decolonizing communication knowledge, as Broadfoot and Munshi recommend, is complicated. Thus I suspend this thread of reflection for now. In the final chapter

of this dissertation, I continue this reflection on my role as a Westernized researcher embedded within the same postcolonial fabric as the Kalanguya. For now, I put aside critical reflexivity in order to provide a precise description of the ethnographic methods used in this study.

### **Ethnographic Methods Used in this Study with a Description of the Data**

Here, I provide a description of the ethnographic methods as well as of the data collected accordingly and is organized into the subsections 1) sampling units and strategies, (2) qualitative interviews, (3) participant observation, and (4) documents and artifacts. Each of the subsections will provide a methodology and, in the case of interviews, participant observations, and documents, a description of the data gathered.

#### **Sampling Units and Strategies**

In this subsection, I discuss both sampling units and strategy as these concepts are closely linked. Specifying a *sampling unit* guides the data construction process by identifying “sites, settings, people, activities, events, or time — of greatest importance for a study” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 110). Consistent with the theories developed in Chapter 2, I use the concepts discourse and text, including Ricoeur's (1973) expanded concept of *meaningful action as text* (see Chapter 2) as a sensitizing concept that allows me to identify specific activities and events to analyze how these are meaningful action (texts) to the participants. By *activities* is meant “extended performances of individuals or groups” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 111). Here, activities were either observed through participant-observation, or elicited through interview narratives and accounts (see next sections). In a similar manner, *events* are segments of activities that are socially significant to the participants (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; see also Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) that are analyzable as meaningful action.

As well, given the importance of interviews, identifying *persons* who are important within sites or setting (specific locations of social significance) are needed in order to identify and construct participants' understandings of various texts. As a rule, sampled persons were based on the forms of knowledge that participants bring to the site (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). These distinctions become important based on roles a person may take on in the course of observation. For example, interviews and observations should distinguish when the participant is an indigenous government official who may be functioning in that capacity, or if the same person is acting as a member of the indigenous group.

*Sampling strategies* refer to a set of rules for selecting particular participants, sites, and events (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). *Criterion sampling* refers to a selection "on the basis of an explicitly stated criterion" (p. 112). My initial criterion relates to the composition of the institutional field surrounding the KEF. That is, given my initial attention to the KEF and government regulatory agencies (especially the DENR and NCIP), my interest here was to discover data units that bore an influence on these organizations' members. Additionally, I sought to understand how these units influence their alternately unilateral and collaborative practices of institutional work.

Using dialogue and translation as sensitizing concepts, I determined the following units in my sampling strategy:

1. Discourse and texts in public dialogues: By this I mean the linguistic forms and practices used by different participants by attending to alternative meanings that emerge through their communication. These include slide presentations, documents such as minutes of past meetings, and extemporaneous statements and

exchanges made by the participants in the process of dialogue. I anticipated that such dialogues would reveal the translational aspects of institutional work.

2. KEF and other PO membership accounts: Here, I solicited organizational identity narratives, especially from elders, current KEF board members, and those Ikalahan/Kalanguya directly involved in forestry work. I sought their depiction of past and present KEF member experiences. These accounts are necessary in order to reconstruct the cultural, historical, and power relations that guide KEF participants as they are involved in public dialogue.
3. Present and former government officials: Here, I sought to observe and interview officers of the NCIP, DENR, and municipal officials that were involved in public dialogue with the KEF. I sought to gain their perspective in order to understand the hybridization of texts as an active process.
4. Barangay Officials and Documents: Barangay captains and officials occupy a boundary-spanning position between their membership within the broader Ikalahan/Kalanguya community, and the legal government. Many of the discursive tensions depicted in this study were revealed through the dialogue and documents (barangay ordinances) produced from this positionality, relative to the KEF and other IPs within the ancestral domain.
5. Official documents invoked in dialogue: Here, I focused on documents that emerged in participants' speech as objects of discourse during dialogic events. These included various laws, ordinances, executive decisions, forestry management agreements, or any document that participants used to justify their actions and positions.



It should be noted that there was often a significant overlap between these units. KEF board members, for example, may simultaneously be municipal councilors. Barangay captains are also Kalanguya elders. Former KEF employees now work for the municipality. Some of the discursive tensions that I witnessed in dialogue could be attributed to this overlap.

In the sections that follow, I describe specific methods and the data they produced.

### **Qualitative Interviews**

In terms of data construction, qualitative interviews were an important method in this study. *Interviews*, as Lindlof and Taylor (2011) explain, “are particularly well-suited to *understanding the social actor’s experience, knowledge, and worldviews*” (p, 173, emphasis from source). Interviews are especially useful in drawing narratives and accounts that reflect the meanings that participants give to action (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012). Two types of interviews were conducted in this study: narrative interviews and informant interviews. *Narrative interviews* are meant to elicit stories, which Chase (2008) describes as “a distinct form of discourse... in addition to to describing what happened, narratives also express emotions, thoughts, and interpretations” (pp. 64-65, cf, Lindlof & Taylor, 2011 p. 181).

Key to this study are organizational narratives, which explore stories told by organizational members and that constitute the collective reality and identity of an organization’s members (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 182). Organizations, according to Boje (1991), may be understood as *storytelling systems*. Stories told among members constitute performative texts, in which the storyteller and audience co-produce the storytelling event that forms the social reality of the organization. The narrative interview thus serves not only as a means towards eliciting stories about the organization, but also as a way of understanding how stories come to constitute institutions as intertextual relationships. The repetition of stories, for example, occur in moments

of conversation, as members “are engaged in a dynamic process of incremental refinement to the story lines of even very widely accepted story texts” (Boje, 1991, p. 110). In terms of the intertextual and interdiscursive construction of institutions conceptualized in Chapter 2, understanding processes of institutionalization requires using texts and discourses as sensitizing concepts. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity will be used here, not only to understand how texts and discourses form and influence organizational reality, but to understand how that reality cuts across different organizations as texts gain authority through retelling within conversations.

As Dutta (2011) and Broadfoot and Munshi (2015) prescribe in their discussion of subaltern agency and postcolonialism, however, there is a need to magnify the subaltern voice *in its own terms*. That is, the subaltern participant’s voice should be expanded not only in terms of gaining an *emic* expression of the subaltern experience (e.g. as-if “information” or “knowledge”), but also that the manner, genres, and epistemology of such expression should be given equal standing to the colonizer’s. A large portion of subaltern agency involves what Broadfoot and Munshi (2015) call *private agency*, a collection of practices of resistance that often go unseen by the colonial subjects of interlocution (see Scott, 1990). Concerning ethnographic analysis, Charmaz (2017) recommends that critical reflexivity should be part of an ongoing evaluation of how narrative interviews are structured, with participants’ stories given as much time as necessary, in order to achieve fullness and reveal that which is hidden from the colonizer in the subaltern experience.

A complement to narrative interviews are *informant interviews*. Informants are people who are knowledgeable about the scene in terms of history, roles, and relationships (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Importantly to this study, informants are “competent users of the local language and possess other forms of social capital” (p. 177). Given the highly contextualized

characteristics of indigenous knowledge and the need for translation, developing trust with an informant becomes crucial to navigating the site and gaining trust with participants. The most important benefit of the informant interview is the ability of the informant to provide an appreciation of the context for any narratives collected from interviews. The informant, thus, becomes a resource towards co-developing theory (Charmaz, 2014) for the those hidden, hybrid spaces of subaltern resistance that need to be contextualized.

In the initial stages, I developed relationships with three informants, all current members of the KEF. Thus, informant interviews were a necessary first step in building relationships with both the organization as well as the wider network of persons and organizations that the KEF are in contact with. This relationship was a translational one; *I needed experts in Kalanguya society who could render their texts and genres into something presentable to a Western audience.* Thus, early interviews were oriented to more general questions about the site and the role of other participants in order to gain trust and an appreciation of the social world inhabited by the Kalanguya. Thus, the informant interviews are relatively unguided and led by the ongoing communication within the site.

In total, I gathered 41 qualitative interviews, including both informant and narrative, each lasting an average of 30 minutes. The shortest interview was only 12 minutes long, while the longest (with an informant) took two and a half hours. I transcribed these interviews using a web browser-based online transcription tool called “Transcribe.” I began transcription while at the site, and continued after I had left the site and returned to Boulder.

I do not distinguish here between the two interview forms because of the generally unstructured format these interviews took. Interviews with informants also elicited organizational narratives along with important knowledge about the site. Prior to my entry into

the site, I had prepared an interview guide based on my research questions. In the course of interviewing, I realized the guide was only useful in the initial stages. As my participant-observation developed, I started to make reference to past events that specific participants were involved in. I also conducted brief ethnographic interviews with participants in the course of observation.

### **Participant Observation: Roles and Writing**

While the collection of interviews was a primary textual source in this project, texts here also produced through the observation of meaningful habitual action (Ricoeur, 1973). As a result, seeing action-as-text requires the presence of the researcher in contexts that participants find meaningful. *Participant-observation* is an ethnographic method whose value “derives from researchers’ having been there and done that” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 136). The ethnographer’s experiences of phenomena are enriched by combining both observation and participation in the social activity of the scene. Through participant-observation, experiencing a phenomenon is contingent on the role one adopts within the social setting, which are often contingent on features of the site as well as the degree of participation.

The identity and roles I enacted were fixed early in my entry to the site. My general attitude in performing observation involved a master role of *observer-as-participant* (Gold 1958, Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, pp. 144--148). As such, I was typically a *peripheral observer* (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 149) of the dialogic events that form the bulk of my fieldnotes. My role was also characterized by the identity formed in relation to my *difference* from the participants (Bourdieu, 1989). I could, of course, not claim a Kalanguya identity as this is normally reserved for actual members of the group. And even though KEF membership is not limited to members of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya, during individual meetings I was characterized through my

engagement with the participants, who identified me as a university researcher. I was introduced as such during meetings and dialogues where my presence required an introduction.

In the process of conducting participant-observation, I wrote scratch notes on paper and took photographs. I later used both notes and photographs as memory aids in writing my experiences as vividly as possible (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 158). To construct such vivid data, I used thick description to elaborate on the “the contextual significance of social practices for their performers” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 135). In this way, thick description is not merely a method for recording fieldnotes; it also stands as an analytical concept that is embedded into the writing consistent with the critical ethnographic approach applied here. Anthropologist Michael Taussig (2012) describes this form of analysis as “allowing writing to take up the burden of theory” (p. 515). Prasad (2005) explains the analytical dimension of thick description as “wading through multiple complex layers of local interpretations and sorting out what [Geertz] calls the ‘structures of signification’ that one can arrive a more comprehensive and insightful cultural portrait” (p. 81). In Geertz’s (1973) seminal piece, there is a clear analytical dimension to thick description: “Analysis, then, is the sorting out the structures of signification. . . and determining their social ground and import” (p. 314). In a phenomenological sense, writing requires us to describe and to pay attention to our embodied experience in order to construct a clear portrayal of how participants themselves might view their worlds, and this can only be accomplished creatively through clear and compelling writing (Ellingson, 2009). Writing thus involves an active reflexivity while bringing the reader into a scene as an immediate and embodied experience.

As a participant observer, I attended 11 specific dialogic events totalling 72 observation hours hours that produced 110 pages of fieldnotes. My sampling strategy for these events was

premised on official KEF participation in discourse. That is, the meetings were either organized by the KEF as well as by others where the KEF maintained an official representation. These dialogic events included two internal KEF management meetings, two KEF board of trustees meetings, an election of the municipal mandatory indigenous representative, a “free prior and informed consent” presentation to the community by a research team, an event described as an “Environment Summit” which included participants from the KEF, DENR, and NCIP, and one *tongtongan* that was called to discuss a case of illegal tree-cutting. The other three dialogic events were a series of consultations conducted between May and July, 2017, where the various POs within the Kalanguya ancestral domain organized themselves into a federation (See Chapter 5).

As demonstrated throughout these and the following chapters, I make extensive use of *vignettes* in the analysis and presentation of the data. I took scratch notes about dialogic events that I subsequently incorporated into vignettes. Vignettes are constructions of scenes that may derive from one or more observation using rich descriptions that provide “a window through which the reader can view some of the pleasure and pain associated with” the site (Humphreys, 2005, p. 840). While most vignettes are constructed from fieldnotes of singular events, some of these were also assembled through more than one observation in order to provide richness. These vignettes may be characterized as distillations of what is essential about the scene, both for its actors, and in terms of the objectives of my research. In order to maintain anonymity, the identity of some of the persons described in the scenes is disguised, that is, I used characteristics of different individuals to construct what may be understood as typical of the Kalanguya. This device was especially true when inserting elders into my vignettes.

## Documents and Artifacts

In this study, the terms “documents” and “artifacts” are applied to different, relatively durable material objects that are meaningful to participants. While documents typically qualify as texts, they also may combine different modes of representation such as photographs.

Archaeologist Ian Hodder (2000) notes that written texts are not only a mode of representation and communication, but also artifacts that contain meaning. As discussed in Chapter 2, artifacts are tangible embodiments of material culture that extend the cognitive production of meaning through time and space (Hodder, 2012). Artifacts here are, of course, texts that are meaningful (Ricoeur, 1973). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) note a tendency among communication researchers to ignore the material elements of culture. Thus, evoking accounts of these formed one intention of my interviews, as well as paying attention “to the spaces, objects, and tools in a scene” (p, 223). In the posthumanist sensibility that this project adopts, the agency of artifacts may be studied through *accounts* of them (Latour, 2005). Paying attention to the meanings that are applied to things is to bring understanding to the role of artifacts in the formation of institutions through texts. I took photographs and video recordings to record some of the rituals described here. The primary artifact that this study analyzes is the forest itself. Meanings about the forest are negotiated between different agencies during dialogues, which then constitute the different understandings of what I call the “forest-text.”

Artifacts collected were primarily in the form of presentation slides, copies of instructional materials and textbooks used by the KEF, and samples of their products for sale. One set of artifacts is particularly worth mentioning -- 274 slides taken from presentations during the Environment Summit. I took photographs of slides from different presentations made by members of the DENR, NCIP, and the KEF.

Considering the importance of institutional texts in this work, documents are material objects that “fix” discourse in durable form allowing texts to “travel” through time and space (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009; Taylor & Van Every, 2000; Hodder, 2012). In the perspective of this research, documents are “symbolic texts that can be retrieved for analysis” (Altheide, 1996, cf. Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 229). As data, documents contain the codes and categories of an organization or culture that embody participants’ worldview, and carry much of the institutional work that texts perform on behalf of their authors.

The documents collected in this research include 448 pages, including KEF internal documents, minutes of meetings, selected pages from the two “Claim Books” of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya ancestral domain, Santa Fe municipal Ordinances, NCIP rules and presentations, photographs of notes written on chalkboards by participants, and official publications of the Philippine government in the forms of laws. Most important, these documents contain texts that are frequently invoked during dialogues. Some of the more important documents collected include the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act, KEF agreements with the DENR, and KEF internal rules contained in internal meeting minutes.

Finally, the Kalahan forest is a material manifestation of an ideal forest that other texts make reference to. The material object of the forest (as artifact) is capable of containing meaning among different readers of what I call the “forest-text” in later chapters. That is, the condition of the forest is made meaningful through the expression of different institutionalized understandings of what a forest is to the different participants. The Kalahan forest exists in a relationship with different other actors, especially the KEF, the DENR, and most importantly, to the lived experience of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya community.



### **Analyzing the Data to Depict Institutionalization**

As a final section to this methodological account, here I explain my analytical methods. These methods include, (1) the use of texts as a sensitizing concept in the coding of documents, meaningful practices, and artifacts as objects of discourse, (2) the use of theoretical memos and concept map to construct categories that I eventually collapsed into the four discourses of *Agroforestry*, *Indigeneity*, *Governance*, and *Land Tenure*, and (3) the identification of discursive tensions through later rounds of coding that emerged from the interdiscursive relationships that I had drawn.

While gathering data, I used the expanded concept of texts (from Chapter 2) as a sensitizing concept while coding data. I coded my interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and collected documents by coding these as texts. For example, dialogues that expressed indigenous practices of the kaingin were coded as “practices of kaingin.” As well, the artifacts of the site, including material objects from textbooks at the Academy, to the buildings at the Dagwey trainings center, and the Kalahan forest itself were coded as texts whenever these appeared as objects of discourses in the dialogues I observed. One particular artifact, the CADT Claim Book of the Ikalahan-Kalanguya Ancestral Domain, appeared in discourses of indigeneity and land tenure. As well, the practices of kaingin appear in discourses of indigeneity.

While at the site, I also wrote theoretical memos as I attempted to make sense of the data. These memos contributed to my development of sampling strategies and construction of categories as I reviewed my data. I used these notes, as Charmaz (2014) recommends, “to explicate and fill out categories” (p. 163) as I outlined categories of discourse and their component texts. In addition to memos, I also traced their interdiscursive relationships by drawing concept maps (Butler-Kiesberg, 2010). I drew several versions of these maps as a means

of making sense of how texts are invoked in dialogue and to collapse them into specific discourses. Tracing these relationships allowed me to abandon some categories and to collapse others into the four discourses that organize the chapters that follow. For example, I identified a discourse on Spirituality that, despite its importance to the Kalanguya identity, did not appear as traces of texts in the dialogic events that I sampled. I also collapsed categories of discourse such as Western Forestry with Traditions of the Kaingin into a unified discourse on Agroforestry, as the texts invoked in the dialogues I observed maintained a tension between those categories.

Finally, I coded the relationships between texts across these discourses in identifying the tensions I explicate in the chapters that follow. The categorization of tensions was the most difficult part of this project as this analysis continued through early drafts of these chapters. Here, I used the construction of vignettes — such as those that appear in these pages — in order to show these tensions as a way to make the reader appreciate the evolving scene and the institutional work that attempts to resolve these tensions. The use of vignettes is thus also analytical in that the choices I made in their construction reflected the discourses and tensions identified in the data.

In the descriptions of methods and data discussed above, I have tried to maintain a critical reflexivity about the relationships of power that are revealed by my participation in these dialogues. Even as I made scratch notes, I could not help but speculate about the roles that my participants and I were taking in the construction of the data. The Kalanguya have been much studied by other scholars and they are used to being active participants in research projects. The NCIP rules on Free Prior and Informed Consent are taken seriously by the KEF, and it was only midway through this project that I was able to articulate my precise role in this site during a meeting of the board of trustees. In my memorandum of agreement with the KEF, I am bound to

share my research findings with the organization. As part of this effort, I shared early drafts of the data chapters with my informants via email. Their comments were invaluable in the construction of the chapters that follow.

## Chapter 4

## Tensions in Discourses of Agroforestry and Indigeneity

*My companions and I are hiking to the famous Imugan Falls. The falls are located a one kilometer hike from the KEF Dagwey Training Center. I can hear the river flowing just below us in the gorge. We walk past a patchwork of fruiting production forest and kaingin (swidden) plots. Some kaingins are fallow; short alder seedlings stand precariously on soil waiting to be cleared and planted. Other plots show mixed seedlings of coffee and alder. A few are planted to ginger. On the margins of each plot, I recognize the heart-shaped leaves of taro alongside strands of tiger grass. But the crop that dominates these upland kaingins is sayote (chayote). "I miss camote (sweet potato)" one KEF companion tells me as he observes the sayote.*

This introductory vignette shows how human activity recreates texts that leave traces in the forest landscape. Reading this particular forest-text requires an understanding of the material effects that the intentional planting of various species has on the land. Different meanings of the forest are embodied in this landscape, constructed by different practitioners, each of whom draw from a variety of texts -- both cultural and scientific -- that constitute the practices of forest management or agroforestry.

For the purpose of this study, it is important to privilege the forest-text in relation to other texts in the institutional field that surrounds the Kalahan Forest. For resource-extraction oriented companies (e.g. mining and lumber), the forest-text is read as a barrier to the desired extraction of natural resources (minerals or wood.) Their texts about the forest-as-resource are "written"

through their logics and practices of extraction. For Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) foresters, they read the forest-text intertextually through Western-oriented scientific texts; they see the forest as part of a global program of forest preservation, in line with global discourses of environmentalism. For bureaucrats at the Philippine National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), whose foundational text embodies an official attitude of beneficence towards indigenous people, the forest is an object that evokes contradictions between the statist imperatives of the Regalian doctrine and a growing set of indigenous texts that claim local authority over forests.

The Kalanguya read the forest-text *intertextually* with texts of their livelihoods, their diet, culture, and their social bonds. The Kalanguya reading derives from a specific configuration of material and social conditions that create the world in which they live. The Kalanguya forest-text is alternately written through the design of sloping plots, the choice of crops, the planting of beneficial tree-species, the divisions of land among families, and the production of food through the social practices of agroforestry, which reinforce a sense of ownership over *their* Kalahan forest.

Translating these meanings of the forest-text during dialogic events forms part of the institutional work of the KEF, as well as of other groups when they engage in dialogue. These translated meanings are subsequently formalized in new hybrid texts as *forestry-management agreements*, which regulate the relationship between the KEF and government agencies. These agreements have thus far constituted a dynamic relationship between the DENR and the Kalanguya people, particularly by minimizing damaging incursions into the forest such as land-grabs, mines, and roads. Importantly, these translated hybrid texts have transformed the organizational texts of both the Kalanguya (KEF) and national government agencies (DENR and

NCIP), as well as those organizations that interact directly with the KEF, such as barangay and municipal governments.

This chapter is devoted to teasing out processes of translation displayed in dialogues about the forest-text involving discourses of agroforestry and indigeneity. I have named these discourses based on the primary *objects-of-discourse* (Foucault, 1972, see Chapter 2) that participants in dialogue reference when discussing their livelihoods. The two discourses are presented together in this chapter because, as I will show, the Kalanguya sense of identity cannot be separated from the forest, and their livelihoods are contingent on their identification as indigenous people. In unpacking this interdiscursive relationship, I will show how discursive tensions emerge once these diverse texts are invoked in dialogic events involving different regulatory authorities. It is by navigating these tensions through dialogue that different parties conduct their institutional work.

I will explore three discursive tensions in this chapter: (1) that between the *traditional text of subsistence agroforestry of the kaingin* and a *Westernizing text of the cash economy*, (2) between the texts of *indigenous cultural performances* and that of *Westernized organizational performances*, and (3) between *indigenous* and *Western understandings* of the forest-text. The discursive tensions discussed in this chapter differ from those to be discussed in Chapter 5, which deal with a different relationship between the discourses of governance and land-tenure, and which are less directly (albeit just as importantly) connected to the forest. As discussed in Chapter 3, the tensions in this chapter are those identified through analysis as being “present” in the dialogic events where the management of the Kalahan Reserve was a principal object of discourse. This is not to say that the discourses contained in Chapter 5 bear no relationship to the discourses in this chapter, but I make here a strategic choice to isolate the forest-text first due to

its primacy among the principal organizations in dialogue, the KEF, the DENR, and the NCIP.

In each dialectical section below, I provide an ethnographic description of the texts configured in tensions and the institutional work by the KEF that attempts to resolve these tensions. A summary of these tensions may be seen in Table 4.1.

| Table 4.1: Tensions in agroforestry and indigeneity   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Texts in Tension  | Meanings of Text (1)   | Meanings of Text (2)   |
| Between (1) Traditional Economy of the <i>Kaingin</i> and (2) Westernized Cash Economy      | Farm practices produce mostly subsistence crops and follow good swidden farming practices.                                     | The growing need for cash brings a preference for cash crops, especially sayote.                                     |
| Between (1) Indigenous Cultural Performance and (2) Westernized organizational performances | Knowledge is collectively shared through dances, attire, songs, feasts. Oral history is maintained by the elders in Kalanguya, | Organizational performance using Western norms of language and knowledge. Written minutes of meetings, using English |
| Between (1) Indigenous Forestry Knowledge and (2) Western Forestry Knowledge                | The forest is bound with their identity. Emphasis on proper management of swiddens and propagation of useful species.          | The natural forest is diverse and balanced mix of species. Humankind interrupts this balance.                        |

### **Tensions in Agroforestry: The Texts of Traditional *Kaingin* and Cash Economies**

*Walking a trail in Imugan is to walk alongside sayote kaingins. From the trail and glancing up the 45 degree slope, the sayote vines shade the soil keeping it moist; their pear-shaped fruit hang heavily off the vines. I hear a hear a noise; a man pushing a cart, its basket full of sayote, smiles at me on his way down the mountain.*

*Later, back in Imugan Centro, a light truck is parked near a cluster of concrete homes. Three men are loading the truck with sayote. I disturb a hen and*

*her chicks as I approach to greet the farmers. I ask them where they are bringing the sayote. One man explains: he and his neighbors have invested in a light truck so that they can bypass the local merchant and sell their product directly at the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Terminal. “We earn more profits this way,” he explains, “but we also need to work more often and buy gasoline.”*

The farmer’s explanation in the vignette above displays a tension among the Kalanguya themselves. Here, the text of *a traditional economy*, based on practices and rituals of shifting agriculture comes into tension with one emphasizing *a growing cash economy*, based on practices and rituals for the production of cash crops. While growing one’s own food is always an option among the Kalanguya, they are also under pressure to earn cash in order to support the education of their children and acculturation of a Western lifestyle. The demands made by the Westernizing texts of a cash economy require crops that may be sold in market transactions, thus materially changing the forest as the traditional *camote* plot gives way to *sayote* (Figure 4.1).

The text of the traditional economy of the *kaingin* describes a Kalanguya livelihood. Swidden practices of shifting agriculture constitute a sustainable organization of the forest, but it produces minimal cash. *Camote* (sweet potato) as the staple food, supplemented by small scale vegetable production and animal husbandry, is sustainable. The sustainability of this scheme had been hammered-out by the elders and the Kalahan Educational Foundation in the form of agreements concerning good swidden practices, such as the construction of firelines and the conducting of downhill burns.





*Figure 4.1: A sayote kaingin near Imugan Centro*

Another text however has made inroads on the institution of the *kaingin*, transforming it into a more intensive form of agriculture -- the text of *sayote* production. The older practice of shifting *camote* fields is giving way to *kaingins* of intensive, monoculture *sayote*. This change in agroforestry practices is relatively new. The current generation of Kalanguya elders remember *camote*, and I heard more than one person express the regret (as in the opening vignette) “I miss *camote*.” But the need for cash is part of a gradual process of Westernization that the Kalanguya also need for their cultural survival.

Although both of these texts may be read by their effects on the forest landscape, the story they tell may be read differently by different observers. DENR Foresters have one text in mind: *kaingin* in general is harmful and needs to be replaced by alternative agroforestry practices. In the DENR texts of agroforestry, the developmental strategy for the forest is to encourage minimally invasive practices of extraction through the harvesting of available and

transplanted resources. Their ideal forest is one that must be protected against threats, which include *kaingin*.

The Kalanguya provide a different reading that sees *kaingin* as livelihood and cultural practices that they have organically developed. This reading was introduced to me by the guide who brought me to a *vista* overlooking the Malico valley in the opening vignette in Chapter 3. Here, my guide's translation of the Kalanguya *kaingin* is not, strictly, the traditional reading of shifting agriculture and planting of beneficial species combined with hunting. Instead, this text is a hybridization of a pre-Western indigenous text with one that acknowledges the presence of Western institutions and attempts to accommodate them. While the Kalanguya tradition includes hunting and shifting agriculture, the realities of a growing need for cash is also inscribed onto the landscape.

In the present Kalanguya reading, the forest-text describes a livelihood that mixes practices of traditional *kaingin* with its shifting agriculture organized around swiddens, as well as more recently introduced texts of *sayote* farming. The Kalanguya use both texts, but *sayote* produces cash more easily, which now forms a greater share of their livelihood. This new hybridized text describes the present Kalanguya forest economy.

In order to provide the reader with a grounded understanding of the tensions in agroforestry, I provide below ethnographic accounts of (1) the traditional text of the *kaingin* economy and (2) the text of the cash economy and how *sayote* has become the principal crop. Using those accounts, I then describe (3) the institutional work of the programs (as texts) that the KEF introduced in order to provide farmers with alternatives to *sayote*.

## The Traditional Text of the Economy of the Kaingin

*Crispin, an elder, explains to me how procuring food from the land was never a problem for the Kalanguya; one either grew food anywhere it could be grown, or one could hunt for it in the forest. Their subsistence crop is camote (sweet potato). Taro grows well in the margins of each plot. Their large, edible heart-shaped leaves are easy to recognize, and the roots are typically boiled as a vegetable. Most farmers also keep chickens to supplement the camote with a protein source.*

*Crispin presses me to eat another piece of a chicken he had grown and slaughtered. His daughter tells me how proud he is of the taste of his native chicken. This chicken I am eating was boiled with spices and unlike commercially grown chicken, is lean and carries the taste of the land that it fed from. It was likely never caged and would have been seen wandering near the farmer's home. He tells me that many farmers also raise pigs as these are favored during feasts. And that there is also deer from the forest! The ability to hunt is part of their tradition; he remembers as a young man that it was normal for a Kalanguya to leave the house in the early morning and return home with a deer before the mid-day meal.*

Crispin's account of the traditional text of the *kaingin* describes a life of growing, gathering and hunting for food. Ideally, agroforestry practices provide the Kalanguya with a sustainable livelihood. *Livelihood*, as understood in the development field, is a code for material and social resources and knowledge, or "the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living" (Scoones, 2009, p. 175). Livelihoods are

sustainable when these capabilities and activities can sustain environmental shocks, are self-maintaining and self-enhancing (through organizations and institutions), and do not “undermine the resource base” (Scoones, 2009, p. 175).

To understand the text of the *kaingin* is to understand their traditional knowledge as beneficial to both the forest and the people. The resource base of the Kalahan provides a livelihood, but only if *kaingin* is done gently; if the Kalanguya plant and gather only for their own needs, the forest is sustainable. However these practices could also be wasteful if not properly managed. This management involves rules formulated by the elders that the KEF has the authority to regulate. Examples of these regulations include: no tree-cutting without a permit; no *kaingin* on the steep slopes; maintaining a fireline around the *kaingin* during burning; and burning must start at the top of the slope.

Thus, the traditional economy of the *kaingin* also has its own set of contradictions; one can live harmoniously with the land, but a regulatory structure is also necessary for its sustainable implementation. This dialectic will be covered more fully in a later section. For now, let us consider how the texts of the cash economy have formed the present practices of Kalanguya agroforestry.

### **The Text of the Cash Economy**

*Crispin’s feast features more than his native chicken. Added to this feast are boiled white rice and Coca-Cola alongside the native chicken and vegetables. This feast is being held at Crispin’s house in Imugan, a durable, three-story, concrete structure that features electricity and a garage where an all terrain vehicle (ATV) is parked. The ATV is not just for show; still robust in his late 60s, Crispin uses the ATV to haul wood that he gathers. On the road fronting his*

*garage, newly harvested rice is spread out to dry. Nearby, two farmers are gathering the dry rice and pouring them into sacks. Crispin tells me more about the Kalanguya economy. This rice is not only for brewing tapuy (rice wine) or for eating during feasts; the farmers sell some of the sacks to merchants for cash. And since Imugan is still predominantly forested land with a production forest, the farmers also gather foreign transplants; fruits such as mango, guyabano, coconuts, and other products that go beyond the traditions of kaingin.*

The above vignette puts the text of the cash economy on display; farmers have a growing need for cash that results from Westernizing influences in their agroforestry text. In this section, I describe the cash economy text and how the pressure for cash has promoted the relatively unsustainable practices of sayote production. Sayote has disrupted earlier texts of a mixed subsistence and cash economy to one that favors more intensive methods of agroforestry intended to maximize a return on the cash investment needed to begin sayote production.

Earlier texts of cash production were relatively sustainable; cash needs were few and supplemented the traditional products of the *kaingin* economy. At least since Spanish colonial times with the introduction of currency, the cash economy is never far away from the *kaingero* (swidden farmer). As livelihood, the text of the *kaingin* has included cash crops. Ginger is famously grown in these uplands and the variety grown here is named “imugan” in the ginger trade and is considered a “native” variety even though ginger is an introduced crop. The production forest also provides fruits that may be eaten locally, but these are also used by the KEF in a canning facility to make various jams for sale. As well, the margins of any *kaingin* also show the delicate, stringy, fruiting structure of tiger grass that will eventually be gathered and dried to make brooms sold to tourists.

The need for cash has encouraged the practice of *sayote* production, which has spread isomorphically throughout the Kalanguya ancestral domain. *Sayote* production as a cash crop is a new text that has come to be hybridized with the traditions of the *kaingin* and older cash economies. The new hybridized text is seen in both the process of planting a *kaingin* and in its effects on the land. *Sayote* is considered problematic by both the DENR and KEF for similar reasons: as a threat to sustainability. One DENR official suggested during the Santa Fe Environment Summit community members should stop creating “*sayote* plantations,” implying that these are considered an unsustainable practice. During the same event, a KEF officer listed “forest encroachment and conversion into intensive agriculture” among a list of “threats.”

There are advantages to growing *sayote* as a cash crop. The *sayote* fruit is desirable among lowlanders as a vegetable for various dishes. It is cheap and available throughout the year and the plant grows best in upland slopes. It is easy to transport even through relatively small-scale methods of transportation (see Figure 4.2).

However, *sayote* needs a system of trellises to support the vines as they grow higher above the ground. Composed primarily of wood and steel wire, the trellises for a single field can cost up to 30,000 pesos (\$600) -- a heavy investment for an upland farmer. The scale of this capital investment makes the practice unsuitable for shifting agriculture. And the practice is considered intensive agriculture since the land can no longer replenish itself every seven to fourteen years as it had been for traditional *kaingins*; *sayote* plots need the continuous application of chemical fertilizer in order to maintain production.



*Figure 4.2: Sayote waiting to be loaded on a truck and transported to markets*

The pressure for more cash is not the fault of the farmer for whom sayote represents a reliable and steady source of cash. The need for cash is itself sourced in texts of modernity. The discourse of Westernized agroforestry treats the idea of livelihood as a way to procure resources from the forest. As described in one DENR slide presentation during the Environmental Summit in Santa Fe, one goal of the National Greening Program (NGP) is the “sustainable supply of forest-based raw materials.” In a memorandum circular issued by the DENR implementing the program, the first objective of the NGP is “to contribute in reducing poverty among upland and lowland poor households, indigenous peoples.” By “reducing poverty” in this case is meant a higher household income, even though many indigenous people remain self-sufficient in food. In both ways, the upland farmer has been encouraged to find products that can be grown or gathered for sale in lowland markets so that the expectations of Western-trained foresters can be

met. The language of extraction economics remains part of official DENR presentations on the National Greening Program; their official slides emphasize objectives such as “sustainable supply of forest-based raw materials.” Sustainability, however, is premised on livelihoods based on cash rewards that are in line with “food security and poverty alleviation.”

### **KEF Institutional Work Engaging the Tension between Traditional and Cash Economies**

*My guide drives me up the hill from Imugan Centro to the KEF facility at a place the locals call “Landing.” Walking past rows of tree seedlings, we arrive at two warehouses where alder logs are soaking in water to soften them. Beneath the shade of a galvanized iron roof are more logs leaning against a concrete wall. There are small, white plugs along the trunks showing where these logs have been inoculated with shiitake spores.*

*As we make our way down, smoke from a burning plot comes into view. I see Hernando, the KEF agronomy consultant, observing the same burning field. He greets me and points to the field explaining, “They shouldn’t need to burn when so much compost is available.” Organic fertilizer can replace burning to enrich the soil, thus eliminating the need for the chemical reaction that releases nutrients. I asked him why this was important, and he explained this in spiritual terms: “God created this land and it is our responsibility to keep it healthy. If God’s grace is withdrawn, the land will suffer.”*

Here, I describe the institutional work the KEF has initiated in order to balance sustainability with a growing need for cash in a Westernizing economy. This work involves creating alternative means of generating cash to replace *sayote*. These practices may be seen as



creating new texts that are invoked in discourse, and that may become institutionalized as authoritative texts.

The introduction of alternative practices to *sayote* production drives much of the institutional work of KEF foresters. They are aware of the tension between the traditional *kaingin* economy and the growing effects of the cash economy. As one forester explained to me, this is a delicate matter for governance; as one KEF forester explained to me, “We can’t tell them what to plant. When we try to tell farmers to stop with *sayote* they will simply say ‘Why not, it’s my *kaingin*.’ All we can do is encourage alternatives.”

Thus, the KEF is currently encouraging alternative practices to *sayote* that are deemed sustainable and less intensive. These practices include cash crops such as organic vegetables, shiitake mushrooms, and coffee. The development of alternative products is part of the regular activity of the KEF. Their latest effort is organic vegetable farming. The growing of organic vegetables is being promoted to farmers as both a source of cash and as a normative set of values that support conservation by avoiding the burning of *kaingins* prior to planting. The KEF has initiated a pilot project to put these practices on display in order to encourage them. Vegetable plots of this sort are not traditional among the Kalanguya and the intentional use of organic fertilizers from composting has not fully taken hold among people used to the “slash and burn” tradition of the *kaingin*.

In order to encourage this technology, the KEF implemented a politically-sensitive plan designed to draw attention to the technology. The KEF management consulted with Hernando, the expert agronomist from Central Luzon State University in Nueva Ecija whom I depicted in the vignette above. The most important material aspect of this plan was the presence of the agronomist himself. During a meeting with the KEF board, he made an impassioned plea for

support, explaining the need to keep the Earth healthy. Thus, he convinced the board members to provide resources for the development of the pilot project. Through his guidance, a plot of land for the pilot project was developed.

Vegetable farming is not the only program initiated by the KEF to provide livelihood alternatives. Older initiatives are also promoted through similar pilot projects in their “Social Enterprise Development Program.” The KEF program also maintains other livelihood projects meant to produce cash for the organization, which the KEF hopes will be adopted by farmers. Besides organic vegetables and shiitake mushrooms, they are actively promoting the cultivation of arabica coffee, as well as the development of ecotourism areas such as the famous Imugan Falls. All of these ventures have the cash economy in mind and are relatively well developed compared to organic vegetable farming. Coffee trees have become visible within the production forest and have been produced in these uplands for generations, but the older varieties were mostly for local consumption. The KEF is introducing arabica varieties that are preferred by exterior markets. Newer still is shiitake mushroom production. Shiitake mushrooms and arabica coffee each have full-time KEF staffers in charge. But the KEF is constantly looking for alternatives. During one KEF staff meeting, the Executive Director asked if anyone has any experience with grape production. In the same meeting, alternative financial sources in the form of agricultural loans were discussed in order to gain independence from foreign funding agencies. Beyond their internal meetings, the KEF is developing new systems of governance that extend beyond the five barangays that they represent (see next chapter). Through the organization of these initiatives and their surrounding dialogues, the KEF conducts its institutional work by the authoring of new texts.

### **The Authoring of Hybridized Indigenous Texts as Alternatives to Existing Texts**

The institutional work in constructing the texts of alternative cash-crops to *sayote*, especially that of organic vegetable farming, provides an opportunity for partial answers to the first two research questions. RQ1 asks how practices of dialogue and translation serve to author hybridized indigenous texts. The discursive authoring and promotion of texts that present alternatives to *sayote* as a cash crop, is especially visible in the pilot organic vegetable farm in the Nasiaan Valley near Imugan Centro. The farm provides a contrary intertextual reference to the nearby *sayote kaingins*; upland farmers may compare the viability of the two alternatives and their effects on the forest-text. Organic vegetable farming intentionally attempts to disrupt the *sayote* cash economy. Its rituals are a translation of the more traditional cash crops -- especially ginger -- that farmers already know how to grow.

The organic vegetable pilot farm is an embodiment of the hybridization that the KEF uses dialogically to disrupt *sayote*. In terms of the theories discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, pilot projects are an embodiment of a new, hybridized discourse on agroforestry that translates into a locally available text, and that farmers can reproduce into (hopefully) new texts of sustainable livelihoods. While these practices are new, they are “written” with an intentionality that references older indigenous texts of the *kaingin*. This translation is normative as well as market driven; the text of *kaingin* does not describe a traditionally cash-based economy. The Kalanguya place value in their *sustainable stewardship* of the environment through the rules of *kaingin*. This text of sustainability informs their newly authored text as a challenge to the unsustainable *sayote*. Thus, it can be claimed that *the authoring of texts includes a hybridization of older ritual texts with intentionally authored texts in order to disrupt existing texts.*

The attempt to disrupt older texts places these different texts in tension, thus the dialectic between the cash and traditional livelihood economies also provides a partial answer to RQ2, which asks how POs negotiate discursive tensions while authoring hybridized indigenous texts. This tension is evident as an internal dialogue among the Kalanguya, with the KEF playing a role that I call *institutional facilitator*. By this term I mean that organizations intentionally create dialogic opportunities to place institutional texts in tension. The tension between sayote farming and the older text of the kaingin is encountered during dialogic events. These events take place in various local venues -- typically barangay-level meetings with other POs in the ancestral domain -- that the KEF uses to encourage new practices of agroforestry governance. It is during these dialogues that the new text is placed in tension with an existing text in order to disrupt existing institutional texts. Thus, *dialogue and translation necessarily involves an organizational role of institutional facilitator that intentionally places texts in tension in order to author a hybridized text*.

While this current section isolated authoring as a form of institutional work, I have intentionally avoided the postcolonial discourse of indigeneity, which is the subject of the next section.

### **Tensions within a Discourse on Indigeneity: Indigenous Cultural Texts and Western**

#### **Organizational Texts**

*The small crowd of Kalanguya, elders and other adults, are sitting on plastic chairs. Everyone is bundled up in jackets; the roof over the Kalahan Academy basketball court is protecting us from the rain. We are here attending a Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) presentation by an archeological research team seeking permission to look for World War II remains of aircraft.*

*The lead investigator of the research team from the University of Chicago is discussing the last slide of her presentation projected onto a screen. She had been presenting in English, which was simultaneously translated into Ilocano (the lingua franca of Northern Luzon) by a Filipino research assistant. After the presentation, the coordinator from the NCIP asked those assembled if the conditions for FPIC had been met. One elder present suggests that they hold a discussion first. The approximately fifty people present quickly turn their chairs to form a rough circle and they proceed to discuss in Kalanguya. Various conditions are proposed and discussed: no extraction of resources, permission must be sought before entering any community, a ritual must be held during the signing of the memorandum of agreement. This last proposal was suggested by the elder seated beside me, who looked at me and smiled as I entered a scratch-note in my journal. From the way he was smiling, I could sense that his proposal was made partly in jest, but was also a reminder that elders believe that indigenous practices must be taken seriously by outsiders. After the discussion was over, the proposals were announced and entered into the standard English language of the memorandum of agreement projected on the screen. The NCIP coordinator stands up to remind the research team that the document must be translated into Kalanguya. The elder who proposed the ritual stands up and declares, “Don’t insult us. We speak English.”*

In the above vignette, I make apparent a discursive tension felt by members of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya when their indigeneity becomes an object of discourse. In this second section, I highlight how this discursive tension affects the forest-text through a discourse on

indigeneity. The performance of indigenous practices on a flat concrete space designed in a Western tradition (a basketball court), covered by a (Western-designed) steel roof, partly reveals this tension. In order to survive culturally, the Ikalahan/Kalanguya need to navigate a path between outright indigeneity and outright Westernization. At times, emphasizing indigeneity through the performance of traditional rituals and dances is useful. At other times, the Kalanguya need to present themselves as “modern” by putting Westernized organizational performances on display. These ritual texts come into dialectical tension when different understandings of what it means to be indigenous contradict each other, and yet depend on each other in order to have meaning.

Indigeneity is a term that in itself is a hybridization of the Kalanguya identity with Westernizing texts. “*Kami mga IP* (We who are IPs)” is a Tagalog phrase that precedes many a claim to indigenous status. A related term used by national law is “people’s organizations,” or PO. “IP,” the acronym for “indigenous people,” and “PO” are performances of texts developed through Western organizational norms. The Kalanguya must perform both texts -- IP and Westernizing -- if they are to maintain their legitimacy as a people and in peoples organizations such as the KEF.

Different signifiers have been used by outsiders to refer to the people of the Caraballo Mountains and the Cordillera. Prior to the adoption of the term, “indigenous people,” groups of self-identifying people that had successfully resisted prior colonial integration were given the term “cultural minorities.” The people also know themselves and neighboring IPs of the Cordillera by another term: *Igorot*. This general term for the mountain tribes of the Cordillera and the Caraballo Mountains includes the neighboring *Ibaloi*, *Kankanaey*, *Ifugao*, and *Ilongot*. More distant groups such as the *Kalinga* are also included in this term. But not all IPs of the

region are included; the *Gaddang* of the lowlands of the Cagayan Valley are not Igorots. Neither are the *Dumagat* on the Eastern slope of the Sierra Madre along the Pacific coast of Luzon, despite their also being neighboring mountain people to the others. But the term IP is now preferred by all of these groups because it has become politically useful; once adopted in formal agreements, the term “indigenous peoples” or simply “IP” can trigger the release of resources such as grants and results such as favorable legal decisions.

In order to maintain their status as “IP,” the Kalanguya (as well as other groups) must also perform a pre-colonial, non-Christian mode of being. They need to put on display aspects of their past that outsiders think of as “indigenous” as they are witnessed in rituals, dances, and music. For the Igorot groups of the Cordillera and Caraballo Mountains, the public eating of a pig-feast is a cultural marker that outsiders can identify. Along with the eating of pigs are performances of traditional dance, and recollections of a martial past, such as the “head dance” that recalls their days of head hunting.

There is a strong interdiscursive relationship between the texts of indigeneity and agroforestry that constitute another dimension to sustainable practices. Because of this interdiscursivity, which I will explicate further in the next section, I include this tension as part of this chapter. In the subsections that follow, I describe (1) the indigenous Kalanguya performance, (2) the KEF’s Western organizational performance, and conclude with (3) the KEF institutional work of maintaining indigenous identity through their discourse.

### **Indigenous Kalanguya Cultural Performance**

*I am attending the inaugural meeting of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya Ancestral Domain Federation. The morning session was devoted to a dialogue among representatives from the various barangay clusters within the domain (to be*

*described in the next section). The afternoon session was devoted to a pig-feast and dancing. The participants break the forward-facing arrangement of their plastic chairs into small circles as trays full of boiled pork -- both flesh and innards -- are passed around. Each plate also gets a piece of blood sausage and rice. There is much banter and laughter as the pig-feast is being consumed. I join three elders discussing the earlier proceedings, and try to make sense of their gossip as they code-switch between Kalanguya and Tagalog (for my benefit). One representative from the NCIP, a non-indigenous man from Manila who is recording the event, joins us and the language (thankfully) turns into mixed Tagalog/English as we discuss the coming music and dance competition.*

The above vignette describes a typical event where different Kalanguya communities are present. Textual hybridity with Western forms is evident. The material symbols of Western modernity are witnessed in the microphones held by elders as they chant ritual prayers. Dancers wear Western shoes and wrist watches along with traditional clothing. I asked a former Kalahan Academy teacher about these rituals and their significance. As an instructor of indigenous culture, the teacher lamented that many rituals have been abandoned with the conversion to Christianity. While dances and songs are remembered, other practices have changed. The *batan* (Kalanguya for the traditional feast) used to be presided by a native High Priest. But there are no longer any High Priests; any elder or local lay pastor good at leading Christian prayer may preside. Adding to the loss of ritual, people no longer wear their traditional clothes properly; some men, for example, do not remove their underwear when wearing the loin cloth. Many wear non-traditional headgear and belts; the traditional knife-belt made from shells is being replaced by plastic reproductions. Among younger people, Tagalog and Ilocano have become their



primary language instead of Kalanguya. But they still learn the traditional songs and dances at the Kalahan Academy.

The performance of traditional culture is not intended simply to express cultural identity; performing these texts legitimizes the status of the Kalanguya as an indigenous people. Despite their hybridization with Western texts, public performances of Kalanguya rituals are still recognizably indigenous to observers. What the presentation of these rituals accomplishes is a basis for claiming indigeneity. To be capable of making this claim is not simply to express and reproduce an indigenous identity; the capability of making such a claim activates state resources that may be enlisted to defend tenural rights and traditional modes of governance (see Chapter 5).

### **Westernized Organizational Performance**

*A regular business meeting of the Kalahan Educational Foundation management team is in progress. Men and women sit on chairs around a table talking to each other. The Executive Director is manning a laptop computer attached to a projector. Projected on the screen is a spreadsheet with budget items listed in Philippine Pesos. A printed agenda, in English, is placed in front of each of the fourteen attendees. One person is taking notes with a ballpoint pen. There is coffee percolating on a table to one side, its aroma permeating the room. The one-story building we are occupying is a relatively “primitive” affair; we are on a rough, concrete floor with no tiles or other finishing. The walls rise only halfway up; the rest of the wall up to the ceiling is mosquito-proof netting. Ceiling fans keep the tropical air moving and the room cool enough to work in.*

*Some days later at the same site, I am attending an organizational meeting of CADT Holders Federation. There are around twenty representatives present from the various barangay clusters. Today's is the last meeting that had been planned prior to the big event on July 12, when delegations from each of the clusters will meet to hold their first general assembly. There are around 20 people now with representatives from each of the clusters. Chairs are arranged facing a chalkboard on which the ED is busy writing. The agenda is clearly spelled out and a map of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya Ancestral Domain is tacked on the left. The KEF board chairman is nearby sitting down and observing. There are many elders present, all of them wearing some variation of Western clothing, although I count two of them with deerskin backpacks.*

The above vignette describes two typical meetings organized by the KEF. While the first is internal, the second is a meeting of the wider Kalanguya community. Although each meeting is a unique dialogic event, both meetings show the evidence of past institutional work and the organizationally-related objects that this work has created.

These organizational rituals of presenting slides, using of chalkboards, writing meeting minutes, and constructing maps, are all Westernizing practices. These did not exist among the indigenous practices of the Kalanguya, prior to Western influences. But to simply claim that these practices are non-indigenous contaminations is to fall into what anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1989) calls "imperialist nostalgia." These rituals, in other words, are not simply strategic; the KEF members find utility and affordances from these practices as they organize themselves. These practices are also legitimizing; the ability to conduct their affairs in a way comfortable to Western and government resources allows useful collaboration to take place.

A good example of the affordances that Western practices provide is seen in geological surveys. The production of these surveys requires the cooperation of both international and national organizations. The knowledge to produce these is sourced in a Western tradition that amplifies the indigenous voice in ways that preserve their culture and identity. One product of this work is the map of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya Ancestral Domain. But as useful as the map is, it also embodies the discursive tension that the participants are attempting to resolve during this meeting. The Kalanguya do not traditionally think of their land in terms of Cartesian lines, points, and colors that the map displays. The map displays a Westernizing influence on traditional concepts of what the land means. It is this result of the institutional work on indigeneity that I present in the next subsection.

### **The Institutional Work of Indigeneity**

*The big event is finally here; the assembly of the CADT Holders Federation of the ancestral domain. The mood is celebratory; many of those present are wearing traditional woven vests over their t-shirts. The KEF ED moves to the front of the crowd and signals the start of proceedings. Although the composition and functions of the Elder's Council had been discussed weeks ago, the participants are now fleshing out the details to answer the question "Who is an elder?" "How old?" one elder asks. This question causes some discussion since the matter of age has always seemed commonsensical to the community members. One elder stands up and makes a short speech, the gist of which is that at least 45 years old seems to be reasonable. Another elder volunteers that the age by itself is insufficient but that maturity should also be a consideration. I hear murmurs of approval. That number is projected on a mostly blank screen and*

*“mature” now appears beside it. The rest of the screen is waiting for other suggestions. “Experience in tongtongan” another elder suggests and everyone nods. “Good morals” suggests yet another. Someone proposes that an elder is someone who has no record of gross immorality and this prompts more murmurs of agreement. “Wise” and “neutral” are in turn suggested and these are added to the screen projection. “Civic mindedness” is mentioned, which prompts a discussion among the group on what this might mean, and eventually makes it to the list. “Social status” someone shouts out. Another suggests “economically stable.” Two elders who had spoken earlier offer their opinion on these last two suggestions. The first suggests that these be combined into “economic social status.” “What does economically stable mean?” is asked by the second. This last comment prompts a good deal of discussion among them and after that “economically stable” is added to “civic mindedness” in parentheses. Other suggestions are made: good manners and right conduct, approachable, not addicted to alcohol, self discipline, good memory, cooperative, obedient to the community, skilled. Slowly, and with great sincerity, a definition of what had once been commonsensical to everyone here based on an oral tradition, is now emerging as an explicit, written text.*

The vignette above serves to show another example of how the institutional text of translation through dialogue is accomplished. *Neologisms of indigeneity*, through the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), become subject to *sensemaking* as the meanings of these new concepts enter the discourse on indigeneity. Although “elders” is a well understood concept, there is a phrase in the IPRA that makes reference to a “council of elders,” which is not

something the Kalanguya have. Another term, “consultative body,” derives from another section of the IPRA that describes, in Westernizing language, the requirement for the NCIP to formulate policy according to the advice of indigenous people.

The KEF has adapted these concepts to Kalanguya needs. Outlined in a document titled “Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation” is the proposed organizational structure with three bodies: The General Assembly (GA), Ancestral Domain Development Council, (ADDC) and Cluster PO Officers. Each body has a different governance function outlined in the document. Yet another document is a draft of the articles of incorporation and by-laws of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation. Its members are other organizations: the five Cluster POs of the ancestral domain.

All of this textual work is done to satisfy the bureaucratic language contained in rules and executive orders of the NCIP. A document with the imposing title “The General Guidelines On The Confirmation Of Indigenous Political Structures And The Registration Of Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations” (NCIP Administrative Order No. 2 Series of 2012) describes the organizationally-related objects that this meeting is creating as “Indigenous Political Structures” (IPS) and “Indigenous People’s Organizations.” The phrase “Council of Elders” describes an IPS thought to be existing, even though this is an object being constructed as I observe this meeting. The constitutive documents of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation constructs new POs such as the GA and the ADDC.

### **Authoring of Texts as Sensemaking and Legitimation**

As mentioned earlier, the assembly of Kalanguya elders described in the vignette used the modality of *sensemaking* (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004; Weick, 1979; 1995)<sup>35</sup> in their

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<sup>35</sup> I use Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy’s (2004) discourse theory of institutionalization, which derives heavily on Weick (1995) explication of sensemaking (see Chapter 2 for the discussion).

attempt to formalize the term for a Westernized audience. This sensemaking was especially evident in their discussion of “economic social status.” While the elders understood this concept tacitly in Kalanguya, translating this into a version understood by external agencies -- especially the NCIP. The construction of an organizational chart to represent the new CADT Federation structure, was predominantly a Westernized organizational performance used a modality of legitimation (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004) the new structure among a Westernized audience. Thus, the Kalanguya concept of traditional performance was hybridized with through a retroactive examination of their tacit understanding of what “elder” and similar components of their traditional texts of indigeneity. Thus, in terms of RQ1, I claim that *dialogue and translation author hybridized indigenous texts through the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation*. As well, in terms of RQ2, *the discursive tensions experienced by the participants are activates the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation in the construction of hybridized indigenous texts*.

The text that was produced in the event will be covered in more detail in the next chapter, as part of a discussion on the discourse on governance. It must be noted here, however, that the discourses on indigeneity and agroforestry depicted here, are not mutually exclusive; there is an interdiscursive dimension that puts texts from both discourses in tension. The final section below will explore this tension between indigenous and Western understandings as they relate to the object of the Kalahan forest.

### **Tensions in the Discourses of Indigenous and Western Forestry Knowledge**

*“How do you know when it’s time to fallow?” I ask my guide. He squats on the ground to pick up a weed with yellow flowers. “This is an indicator species. It shows up when the soil’s phosphorus is low.” He hands me the weed. I look at this plant on the palm of my hand. I would otherwise have ignored it had*

*my guide not pointed it out to me. “How did you learn this?” I ask further. “It’s common knowledge,” he replies. He picks up another weed with blue flowers and shows it to me, “This plant is medicinal, and it is also useful when making tapuy.”*

In this section, I discuss a tension that emerges when Western and indigenous knowledge compete for legitimacy in discourse. This discussion depicts an ongoing dialectical tension between different forestry texts; the KEF encourages one set of practices that are sometimes at odds with those of university-trained foresters. However, community-based forestry management is also part of the Western tradition that needs organizations such as the KEF in order to be effective. Past institutional work by the KEF agroforestry team required a collaboration between foresters educated through a Western tradition in Philippine universities and with KEF foresters who have a more intimate relationship with a particular forest. The result was a recovery of much of the original forest cover of the Kalahan. A story is told in Imugan about one former DENR secretary who famously said, “When I was flying here by helicopter, I saw that your community was a field of green surrounded by brown.” This story is told in the context of how KEF practices of agroforestry have been successful in restoring much of their forest over the years. Thus, despite the tension between Western-based and indigenous knowledge, effective forestry conservation is performed through collaboration between the DENR and the KEF.

The distinctions between Western and indigenous forestry texts may be seen through expressions about how the forest-text is read. This dialectical tension is as much about modes of governance as it is about which trees are environmentally good (see Chapter 5). But the hermeneutics of the forest-as-text also translate differently between the two systems of knowledge, even as they are hybridized into a third text that accounts for existing practices. The

Kalanguya see the forest differently from Western-trained foresters and these differences become apparent in the formation of a dialectical tension in their hybridized text. In the next three subsections, I construct interpretations of these texts, as I understand them based on my conversations with both KEF and DENR foresters.

### **The Forest-text in terms of Western Forestry Knowledge**

*According to one slide presented by a DENR national official, their definition of “natural environment” is one “without humankind.” Another slide presented by the DENR official reads:*

What is [a] natural environment? The result of the dynamic relationship between climate, soils, micro-organisms, plants, water, and animals, where vegetation is able to reach its state of climax for a given environment -- climax would be forests. Humankind’s activities significantly influence the development of climax vegetation or else destroys it altogether.

*Another slide includes the text:*

*kaingeros, squatters, cultural minorities, and other occupants who entered prior to Dec. 31, 1981 shall not be prosecuted... no increase of clearing, but maybe [sic] ejected & relocated whenever the best land-use of the area so demands.*

The vignette shows how a Western-sourced concept of an ideal natural forest has no people in it. In the logic of this definition, “natural” is opposed to “humankind.” Because humans are considered a disruptive species, their activities must be regulated through government established rules crafted by professional foresters. The relationship of the government with local



communities is to enlist locals to help preserve a natural environment by restricting access and limiting forest activities. This story is told through a series of projected slides displaying the numbers of species and habitats under the general term “biodiversity.” The Philippines is included in a list of “megadiversity countries”; approximately two-thirds of the world’s species live in just 17 megadiverse countries. Biodiversity is a matter of counting Philippine species: 101 species of amphibians, 576 species of birds, 40 species of mangrove, numerous bats, corals, and so on. Of flora there are between 10,000 to 14,000 species found in the various habitats. Other numbers are important in this relationship of the forest to humankind, especially the relationship between ground cover and erosion. 10% ground cover is considered disastrous, with 21 tons per hectare of soil lost annually to erosion. 37% ground cover is considered “fair,” with a much smaller 1.2 tons of soil lost annually. “Good” begins at 60% ground cover, with a soil loss of only 0.07 tons of soil annually.

The story these numbers tell conforms to the DENR vision of an ideal natural forest measured by counting the material, non-human aspects of the forest. In the understanding of the forest-text as understood by the DENR, sloped agriculture is acceptable only if done properly according to current agroforestry knowledge coming from a Western tradition. Doing upland agriculture right means managing the furrows and ratio of ground cover in order to minimize *runoff*: when the rainfall amount exceeds the ability of the soil to absorb water. Runoff turns into creates erosion and floods that severely affect downstream settlements. At least nominally, *kaingin* is understood as “slash and burn” agriculture and is considered illegal. However, the human element of the *kaingin* is contingent on determination by the DENR and according to their own rules.

This understanding of the forest-text concedes the presence of indigenous, human occupancy from a pre-colonial past. That indigenous people are lumped into a category that includes “kaingeros” and “squatters” reflects the origin of this understanding in the Regalian Doctrine; a forest belongs to the public and is, therefore, controlled by the government. But a concession to already-present inhabitants is tolerated as long as they follow good land-use practices. Bad practices include “cutting, gathering, collecting, or removing of timber or other forest products... from any forest land... without authority.” The official text of agroforestry is that the forest and all species within it are regulated by a government authority with a system of penalties that are imposed on what is considered destructive human activity.

### **The Indigenous Forest-text according to the Kalanguya**

*I begin climbing the hillside with my guide, who lends me his hand on the steeper sections. Dense tropical forest engulfs us, but these are not native species. A seemingly random mixture of trees covers our view of the valley below. My guide brings me further up to flat space where a trail is barely visible. “This used to be the main trail to Barangay Unib,” he explains. If you follow this back you will end at the Kalahan Academy. “You no longer use this trail?” I ask. “Not since the gravel road below us was developed. Now you can take a tricycle from Unib to Imugan.” As we descend the mountainside, the Nasiaan valley and river come back into view. There are vegetable plots that lead up to sayote kaingins in the lower slopes on the far side. The forest continues up the steeper slopes with dipterocarps that cover this side of Mount Imugan.*

The Kalanguya concept of the forest-text is intimately bound to their identity. The Kalanguya do not speak about their forest in generalized terms; the Kalahan Reserve is a specific

forest that the Kalanguya refer to as *kuyanmi* (it is ours). One of their names for themselves reflects this relationship with the forest: Ikalahan, or “people of the broadleaf forest.” Kalahan means a particular type of forest composed of dipterocarp species. The term is sometimes translated as “broadleaf” or “oak” forest (although dipterocarp species are not oak), but whatever the translation, the distinction of broadleaf to pine forest is important to them.

The Kalanguya forest-text is a mixture of dipterocarps, fruiting species, and kaingins. The forest-text looks this way because the Kalanguya mingle their livelihood with this landscape. A walk on a mountain trail is to walk among sources of life; the dipterocarp of the Kalahan reserve holds water and propagates species for hunting. The production forest gives fruits for processing, and also helps to keep the land in place. The swiddens grow food products in furrows that obey the slope of the land in a way that prevents erosion. Some are planted with trees once nutrients are depleted. While not all of these practices are beneficial on their own, they produce a livelihood for a people that care for the forest. This text is partly derived from new knowledge from the West, but these are then incorporated into the indigenous lifestyles. But adopting a practice can also lead to tensions with the text of other practices, depending on the observer.

The density of species makes life in the *kuyanmi* possible, as well as preferable to the struggles that peasant lowlanders practicing monoculture must accomplish in order to feed themselves. When it was suggested to the Kalanguya that they could be relocated to the lowlands, one elder remarked to me that this would be the end of their culture and livelihood. They view kaingin as the normative form of upland agroforestry; properly managed swiddens conserve the forest. The production forest, with its planted species of fruiting and timber species, is also natural to a people who encourage the right type of growth for a forest to feed humans.

Even at the Santa Fe Poblacion, the forest begins right behind the four buildings of the municipal compound and continues up the slope and onwards towards the reserve.

### **Institutional Work in a Process of Dialogue that Intersects Agroforestry and Indigeneity**

*I am attending the Environmental Summit. The NCIP representative is presenting her slides that explain the IPRA. The series of slides display the various parts of the IPRA that pertain to indigenous rights. One slide reads:*

Section 13, IPRA. “The State recognizes the inherent right of ICCs/IPs to self-governance and self-determination and respects the integrity of their values practices, and institutions.

Consequently, the State shall guarantee the right of ICCs/IPs to freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development”

*The presentation continues and once it is concluded, the facilitator asks the attendees for comments and questions. One participant approaches the microphone and asks if the values of “self-governance and self-determination” extend to an indigenous right to regulate chainsaws. The DENR speaker from Manila takes the microphone and asks rhetorically in Tagalog, “Is chainsaw an indigenous practice?” A murmur passes through the crowd as they digest this rhetorical question. Another participant, one of the KEF foresters, approaches the microphone and states, “I feel offended by what you imply, that chainsaws are not an indigenous practice. We also wear shoes.” The DENR representative shows a confused look as she takes in what (to her) is a contradiction.*

This vignette shows a moment when different understandings of agroforestry and indigeneity come into tension. Later in the proceedings, the KEF representative gave a thorough

presentation about the work they are doing in promoting sustainable agroforestry. After his presentation, the DENR presenter who asked the rhetorical question approached the KEF representative and began a discussion.

It is through dialogic events like the one described above that meanings of indigeneity and agroforestry are negotiated and translations accomplished. The Ikalahan/Kalanguya see no separation between their agroforestry and their indigeneity. The technologies used here are not only the traditions of the *kaingin*, but also include innovations such as chainsaws. Chainsaws are regulated by the barangay and can only be issued with proper consultation with the KEF. Other agroforestry rules are those discussed previously: No tree cutting without permission, controlled burns, firelines, no planting of disapproved species. While these KEF regulations are aligned with those of DENR, the fact that the KEF can impose fines outside of the Philippine legal system is still problematic.

### **Promoting Alternative Onto-epistemologies to the Regalian Doctrine**

The similarity of regulations in the previous subsection still leaves open the question of, “Who regulates the forest?” That question expresses the tension between the Kalanguya ability to conserve their forest habitat in accordance with indigenous practices of *kaingin*, and their adoption of Western practices. As in the previous section, challenging the Western text, however, means making this tension dialogically explicit in order to expose the contradiction between Kalanguya and Western forestry knowledge when “indigenous” is already hybridized with “Western” among the Kalanguya. Thus, in response to RQ1, *the authoring of texts includes the institutional work of making tensions explicit in dialogue.*

Exposing tensions, however, means promoting an alternative text that challenges the Regalian Doctrine. The difficulty here for those trained in Westernized forestry knowledge is

that indigeneity is linked to a text of identity defined by a set of practices assumed contradictory to Western knowledge, thus delegitimizing a Kalanguya text of forestry management. The Kalanguya response is to translate Kalanguya indigeneity as being capable of hybridizing their practices with Western forestry knowledge (e.g. the regulation of chainsaws). Thus, another partial response to RQ2 here would be, *hybridized indigenous texts should dialogically challenge existing institutional texts in order to generate discursive tensions.*

### **Conclusion: The Institutional Work of Authoring Texts in Tension**

My discussion in this chapter demonstrates how the institutional work of the KEF produces a hybridized text of Western-style agroforestry that incorporates their status as indigenous people. This discussion provided some answers to the Research Questions 1 and 2 that I will discuss in two sections below. To recall, in Chapter 1 it was theorized that dialogue and translation are co-present practices, both of which are intimately bound with the development, negotiation, and construction of meaning. That is, dialogic spaces are those where participant interlocutors become profoundly aware of each other's differences, thus creating the possibility of mutual transformation. Similarly, translation as a dialogic practice is transformative; both the colonizer and subaltern subjects find their understandings profoundly changed through the construction of hybridized indigenous texts. In the sections that follow, I discuss the institutional work of dialogue and translation through the claims produced in the examination of discursive tensions in the sections above.

### **The Authoring of Hybridized Indigenous Texts**

In this subsection, I discuss claims that refer to RQ1, which reads, "How do POs practices of dialogue and translation serve to author hybridized indigenous texts?"

I claimed in the first section, the discourse on agroforestry, that “the authoring of texts includes a hybridization older ritual texts with intentionally authored texts in order to disrupt existing texts.” The intertextual relationships between indigenous and Westernized texts produce hybridized institutional texts through an intentionality of disrupting a current institutional text.

In my claim in the second section on indigeneity, I state, “dialogue and translation author hybridized indigenous texts through the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation.” The construction of a hybridized indigenous text of transforms the tacit meaning of “indigenous,” expressed in rituals, into a formal written text. The translation is accomplished through the retrospection of sensemaking. The construction of the written text in English conforms with the expectation of a Westernized organizational performance, thus lending such an expectation into the legitimacy of the hybridized indigenous text.

In the third section, I made the claim that “the authoring of hybridized indigenous texts includes the institutional work of making discursive tensions explicit in dialogue” This claim points to an intentionality by the actors engaged in institutional work. That is to say, through an awareness of difference, the indigenous PO brings to light the discursive tensions between contradictory texts. The dialogic encounter makes the difference between institutional texts salient and establishes the ground from which a translation of both texts into a hybridized indigenous text commensurable to the actors present.

### **The role of Tensions in Authoring Hybridized Indigenous Texts**

As discussed earlier, discursive tensions are an important component of transformative dialogues. To this end, RQ2 asks, “*How do POs negotiate discursive tensions in authoring hybridized indigenous texts?*” This chapter examined three tensions, and the institutional work through which the KEF attempts to resolve these tensions. Although the KEF takes a lead role in

engaging this institutional work, the wider community also engages in the translation of agroforestry and indigenous texts into hybridized indigenous texts. Importantly, both the KEF and the government agencies translate their understanding through dialogic events where difference becomes salient. In this concluding sub-section, I will explicate the three claims made in the earlier sections.

The first claim that is a partial response reads, “*that intentionally places texts in tension in order to author a hybridized text.*” This function of this role is to create dialogic opportunities for institutional texts to be revealed in discursive tension, and is consistent with the third claim above of making these tensions explicit. This role is frequently engaged in by the KEF during dialogic events they organize, as well as whenever they are involved in dialog with other parties and they intentionally introduce a tension into the event’s discourse. The role of institutional facilitator is, thus, either inherent to the design of a dialogue, or opportunistically engaged in during dialogic events that were not intentionally designed to reveal these tensions.

In a second claim, I state that “the discursive tensions experienced by the participants are activates the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation in the construction of hybridized indigenous texts.” This claim proceeds from the previous claim. The intentionality of institutional work is contingent on the participants feelings of tension in dialogue; experiencing discomfort from contradictory texts impels participants in dialogue to engage in sensemaking and legitimation. In the Kalanguya case, the persistent presence of the phrase “council of elders” led to rounds of sensemaking and attempts towards construction of the legitimacy of the concept.

Finally, the third claim reads, “hybridized indigenous texts should dialogically challenge existing institutional texts in order to generate discursive tensions” This claim is also based on the intentionality of institutional work. Participants engaged in textual work need to challenge an



existing text in dialogic opportunities in order to make tensions salient in discourse. The important aspect of this claim is that institutional texts need to be disrupted through such challenges in order to be delinked from their original meaning.

In this chapter, I have described three discursive tensions that were present in discourses of agroforestry and indigeneity, and have generated claims in response to research questions 1 and 2. While discursive tensions are sourced in intertextuality, I have thus far not fully engaged the function of intertextuality in the authoring of hybridized indigenous texts. In the next chapter, I describe and discuss these intertextual tensions in light of the construction of authoritative texts and how these shape institutional fields.

## Chapter 5

## Tensions in Discourses of Land Tenure and Governance

*My bus passes underneath a monumental arch spanning the two-lane Pan-Philippine highway. On the South facing side of the arch, the Tagalog words “Salamat Po, Nueva Ecija” (Thank you, Nueva Ecija) are displayed. The bus stops to let off passengers who wish to visit the monuments in a flat space around 100 meters from the arch. Now at the North side of the arch, I see the words “Mabuhay Nueva Ecija” (Long live Nueva Ecija). On the Northern side of the arch are also concrete buildings that feature roadside eateries, souvenir shops, and garden stores selling rare orchids that were illegally harvested from the forest. A concrete obelisk stands on the West side of the road with the words “Region 2” on a cube at its apex. A nearby sign that reads “Welcome to Balete Pass Tourism Complex. Chinese Shrine, Japanese Shrine, Dalton Pass View Deck.” I walk up a gently-sloping, concrete path that leads to the monuments mentioned in the sign. At a higher level of the complex, I see a concrete obelisk that memorializes the Chinese militia that joined with Philippine guerilla units that operated in these mountains during World War II. Walking up the trail leads to a another level of the complex with the four monuments of the Japanese section of the memorial. One of them is a concrete block with the words “Erected in honor of those soldiers of the 25th Division who sacrificed their lives in winning this desperate struggle,” followed in larger letters “Balete Pass.” Beside the first monument is a white, concrete cross with the English words “Peace Forever,” on*

*the horizontal bar. Walking further upwards leads me to a flat point with a vista of the pass and surrounding mountains. Towards the North lies the Cagayan Valley. To the South is the central plain of Luzon. This vista also shows the Kalahan forest surrounding me. Descending from near this point are two gorges, one heading southwards to the Central Plain of Luzon, the other northwards to the Cagayan Valley. As I walk down through the monument complex, I feel the crisp mountain air wet with clouds that hug the surrounding rainforest. Back at the highway near the arch, I wait for a bus, hopefully with an available seat, to head down the Northern slope of the pass towards Santa Fe Poblacion.*

While marking a historical location on the way to or from the Cagayan Valley, the monuments described in the vignette above also serve as a symbolic boundary in various, other ways. Politically, that high point in Dalton Pass<sup>36</sup> marks the boundary between the municipalities of Santa Fe and Carranglan, as well as the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija. Administratively, it marks how the national government divides the nation into different regions, creating the boundary between Region II (Cagayan Valley) and Region III (Central Luzon). Geologically this ridge of the Caraballo mountains separates the Cagayan river basin from the Pampanga river basin. Linguistically, the *lingua franca* South of this ridge is Tagalog, and to the North it is Ilocano.<sup>37</sup>

The same monuments also mark a boundary imposed between two Kalanguya titles of ancestral domain, that is largely a fiction intended to satisfy the national bureaucracy. Although

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<sup>36</sup> The pass is called either “Baleté” or “Dalton” in different references. The latter is how the pass is marked on KEF maps of the ancestral domain. As well, the national highway is variously called “Pan-Philippine Highway,” “Maharlika Highway,” “Philippine-Japan Friendship Highway.”

<sup>37</sup> Tagalog is the dominant regional language of Regions III, IV, and the National Capital Region. However, Tagalog is also used nationally by most Filipinos due to the importance of the national capital and its promotion through public education as “Filipino.”

most people living in the settlements bordering both sides of the monument identify as Kalanguya and share a common culture and identity, the Philippine administrative logic requires that each certificate of native title and accompanying claimbook must be signed by a regional head of the NCIP. Despite KEF requests to keep the two ancestral domains as a single unit, there was no administrative mechanism that would have allowed the issuance of a title over land in one region to be signed by the director of another region.

The text that divides the Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain derives from the Regalian Doctrine, whose function in discourse has geographical, demographic, cultural, and colonial implications for the Kalanguya. As discussed in Chapter 1, the text preserves a historical authority based on the “discovery” of the Philippines by an agent of the Spanish monarchy in 1521 (Lynch, 2005). That historical authority created the provinces and municipalities where the Kalanguya lived at the time the boundaries were established. The oral history of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya places their origin in the areas surrounding Mt. Pulag, Luzon’s highest peak (2,992m), which marks the boundary between the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Ifugao, and Benguet. More precisely, the mountain also marks the boundaries of the municipalities in the three provinces (respectively) of Kayapa, Tinoc, and Kabayan where significant populations of Kalanguya people historically resided. Their history tells of a period of plague and headhunting that caused many of them to migrate South, establishing themselves in what would eventually become the combined Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain.

I relate the Kalanguya origin account because of the question of boundaries that divide these ancestral domains. People on both sides of Dalton Pass settled here relatively recently compared to other Kalanguya communities but their cultural influence on the region is

significant. Their language<sup>38</sup> is used in the everyday speech of most of the people living in this portion of the Caraballo Mountains. Prior to the issuance of CADTs, there were no formal boundaries marking the Kalanguya territory; each community was self-governing and maintained relationships with other nearby communities. Today the legally constructed documents of the CADTs provides a guarantee of possession by indigenous groups. Thus in keeping with Western practices, the Kalanguya have drawn the boundaries of their land through official cadastral surveys.

I have recounted the history, geography, and demography of this region because of their importance to the three discursive tensions that I explore in this chapter. As explained in Chapter 2, texts influence and are influenced by other texts; they are copresent in discourse as they penetrate, exist within, and form networks together with other texts (Kuhn, 2008). These intertextual relationships produce discursive tensions, once they enter discourse. In this chapter, I discuss discursive tensions observed in Kalanguya and Filipino discourses of governance, land-tenure, and indigeneity. Generally, these tensions are a result of the persistence of colonial institutions, such as the concept of boundaries, as they encounter indigenous institutions of land use and governance. The boundaries between provinces and regions do not neatly overlay with the Kalanguya sense of their territory. It was only when the Kalanguya attempted to gain official recognition from the national government that these overlapping authoritative boundaries became problematic. Because of these boundaries, as defined through colonial history and the Regalian Doctrine, the Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain of Nueva Vizcaya, and the Kalanguya ancestral domain of Nueva Ecija, are legally distinct and formed through different accumulations of documents to satisfy institutions that are foreign to the Kalanguya. At the same

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<sup>38</sup> Although I have used the term “Kalanguya” to designate the language, their speech is also called Kallahan and Kalangoya. The people of Santa Fe use the term “Kalanguya” (see Chapter 3 for a discussion).

time, because the Kalanguya are a majority in this area, they have to negotiate between two separate texts of authority: traditional (through elders), and colonial (through provinces and municipalities).

| Table 5.1: Tensions in land tenure, governance, and indigenous authority          |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Texts in Tension  | Meanings of Text (1)  | Meanings of Text (2)   |
| Between (1) Indigenous and (2) Western Texts of Land Tenure                       | Tenure is not alienated from the ancestral domain.<br>Disputes are settled by elders and common neighborliness  | Land is titled and alienated from the ancestral domain.  |
| Between (1) Indigenous and (2) Formal Texts of Governance                         | Governance is performed locally through the tongtongan.<br><br>Barangays play a role in conformity with the elders traditions. Barangay captains and officers are often elders or elders to be. | Provincial and Municipal governments exercise juridico-legal authority over all persons within their boundaries.<br><br>Barangay is the lowest tier in the hierarchy of governance, and draws its authority through this hierarchy |
| Between (1) Kalanguya and (2) governmental understandings of indigenous authority | The Kalanguya own their ancestral domain and thus can decide on their own rules of governance.  | Indigenous authority is respected by must finally conform to national governmental interpretations.  |

The focus of this chapter includes the three discursive tensions constituted by these differences in institutional texts, as these tensions appear through discourses in governance, land-tenure, and indigeneity. In the sections that follow, I will discuss three specific tensions, including: (1) between two different understandings of land-tenure: indigenous and Western, (2) in the discourse of governance between the traditional legal system of the Kalanguya elders and that of formal, legal Philippine governance, and (3) between competing texts of indigenous authority. I have chosen to analyze these particular tensions because of their prominence in the

institutional work of the KEF, as observed in dialogic events in which they organized or participated. As a result of this analysis, we will better be able to understand how institutional work produces transformative, authoritative texts that constitute new institutional forms that are hybrid versions of Kalanguya and Philippine institutions. A summary of these tensions is provided in Table 5.1.

### **Tensions in the Discourse on Land Tenure**

*My t-shirt sticks to my back from sweat as my guide and I are walking a path back to our parked truck. It is midday late in the dry season and very hot -- at least 30 degrees Celsius -- despite the dappled cover from the trees surrounding us. Suddenly, our path widens into a road and we are back at the sitio. The CENRO forestry staff motorcycles are still parked, indicating that their riders are still up the mountainside inspecting a National Greening Program site.*

*We take this opportunity to rest and as I sip water, I have time to observe the surrounding sitio. Even as the forest surrounds us, there are half a dozen homes here. The nearest one is typical of the others; it was assembled from freely available materials. Rough, irregular wooden planks form its walls. The roof is made of corrugated galvanized-iron sheets. The front door is wide open and a hen and her chicks are pecking at the ground nearby. I cannot see into the house from where we sit; I don't notice any activity. Looking around, I see above us, coconut fronds reaching down from two trees that had been planted along the road. A few meters further is a guyabano tree with its long, dark, green leaves and hanging soursop fruit. Further still along the road into the sitio is a mango tree starting to bloom. Also nearby is a low stone and mortar wall that shelters a rough roasting*

*spit, its floor covered in black charcoal remnants of past feasts. Arranged neatly on the nearby roadside are fronds of tiger grass drying in the sun, waiting to become part of a broom. Further downhill is a concrete cistern overflowing with water fed by a rubber hose from a spring up the mountain side. Despite the use of humble materials, the homes here are neatly occupied. All except one are unfenced.*

*I ask my guide, "Is the property in this sitio here titled?"*

*He explains, "This sitio? Their muhons (boundary stones) are recorded by the KEF since Barangay Baracbac is part of Cluster 1. But these titles can't be separated from the CADT title."*

*As I struggle to understand their titling system, my guide suggests, "Hey, it's too hot. Let's return to the Poblacion and wait for the CENRO foresters at Nora's Eatery."*

*About a kilometer later, we are back at Santa Fe Poblacion with two story concrete buildings along both sides of the national highway. Just past these buildings, we arrive at a two story wooden house and enter the eatery within. As we sit down, my guide continues to instruct me: "This land along the highway is mostly titled through the municipio."*

*"Aren't we still within the CADT?" I ask.*

*"Yes, but since these titles were created prior to the issuance of the CADT, we must honor them according to the IPRA."*



The beginning of the above vignette took place at a *sitio*<sup>39</sup> in Barangay Baracbac approximately 500 meters off the main road between Poblacion and Imugan. To get to this *sitio*, we drove the KEF truck half a kilometer uphill from near Barangay Baracbac Centro. The one-lane, concrete road climbs a relatively steep grade. Along the way I noted about a dozen homes lining both sides of the road. The paved portion of the road ends at the cistern and houses mentioned in the vignette. The description I provide in the vignette is important because the materiality of Kalanguya indigenous land-tenure is not normally precise. Traditional pre-colonial Kalanguya land-tenure depends on *bayanihan* (Tagalog: communality, neighborliness) and places the burden of settling disputes on the elders through a *tongtongan* (see next section). No formal titles are issued and tenural rights are known through family histories.

That the *sitio* exists at all is due to the current hybridity of land tenure among the Ikalahan/Kalanguya. Because of the intertextuality with Western colonial texts of land tenure, Kalanguya texts of land use have become hybridized. Whereas their traditional texts emphasized neighborliness and resolution of conflicts through dialogue and elders, contemporary land use within the ancestral domain now have formal boundaries regulated by the results of cadastral survey. Thus, while the relationships between households maintains traditional patterns, production areas have been surveyed and landmarks placed to designate boundaries.

The texts of *kaingin*, though, still depend on a discourse of governance as translated through the elders, as well as the KEF's adaptation of the text of native title granted by the IPRA. Much of the current discourse on land tenure derives from earlier institutional work done by the KEF in collaboration with the DENR over a decade prior to the appearance of indigenous rights

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<sup>39</sup> Barangays are typically divided into quasi-official *puroks* (zones) at the centro, and *sitios* (outlying settlements.) While *sitios* and *puroks* have no formal governmental status in Philippine law, they are recognized by the barangay government as a subunit (Abinales & Amoroso, 2005).

in national legal texts. In this section, I highlight how present KEF institutional work communicatively maintains those institutional texts that had been accomplished through past institutional work. In order to maintain Kalanguya authority over their ancestral domain, the KEF and other POs have engaged in institutional work in order to gain an evolving consciousness concerning indigenous rights to their ancestral domain as unalienable. In the subsections that follow, I describe and discuss (1) the indigenous system of land tenure as practiced by the Kalanguya, (2) the formal system of land tenure and its adaptation to native title, (3) the discursive tension between the two systems and how KEF institutional work attempts to resolve these.

### **Traditional Kalanguya Texts of Indigenous Relationships with the Land**

*Ponhik and Liwan have adjacent land claims. But both of them claim a portion of the land between them and they cannot agree on who really owns it. A neighbor is tired of their constant arguing and calls for a tongtongan. All of the elders go to the land in question and they laugh because the disputed land is rocky and not suited for agriculture anyway. The elders discuss the matter and decide that the disputed land, about one hectare, should be a community forest. The two men are required to plant forest trees in the land, especially trees that would improve the habitat for wildlife. Neither of them are allowed to claim it. "That land belongs to the birds and wildcats," decide the elders with finality. The two parties agree with the elders about the land, and they also agree to stop their arguing. They share the cost of the tongtongan. They have no more fights (adapted from Rice, Oliano, and the Ikalahan Elders, 2014).*

The *tongtongan* (see next section) described in the passage appears in a textbook on indigenous governance. The Kalanguya system of justice relies on maintaining good relations between neighbors through the communal authority of the elders. Thus, the Kalanguya logic of boundaries is based on what action would benefit the community and end a dispute. In the case above, the elders decided in favor of building community resources rather than have either neighbor claiming exclusive rights to the land.

Through the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), indigenous customary law is protected within the ancestral domain and the land may be titled communally by the entire tribe. Tenural rights to specific sites among the Kalanguya depend largely on neighbors knowing each other and maintaining a sense of community. The elders play a role in remembering which family lives where and what debts are owed between members. Their oral history is linked to this tenural arrangement with the forest; the Kalanguya live in *sitios* such as these, as well as in more substantial homes lining paved and unpaved paths in the *puroks* in the barangay centro. These tenural rights are protected by the national government and depend on government-crafted texts contained in laws, regulations, and administrative orders.

Walking the paths fronting homes in Imugan, this attitude of neighborly resolution of competing claims is written into the suburban landscape of the Centro. Although some of the newer houses have concrete fences, the typical dwelling is unfenced and in a haphazard relationship with other dwellings. There is no regular pattern among the houses, each having been planted at the whim of an original settler. They are connected by paved concrete paths that run along the slope of the hills surrounding the town. There are few durable structures; most of them are built from available materials. Crispin's three-story concrete home is an exception, as are two other significant dwellings in the Centro.

Outside of the Centro, houses cluster in smaller groups of *sitios*. These groups of between three and a dozen houses blend into the production forest on either side of the path that leads to them. As one walks a path, the demarcations between *kaingins* are apparently unmarked. Instead, land ownership is determined by neighbors through oral history and memory, and disputes are settled by elders.

The Kalanguya tradition of settling disputes through the dialogic process of the *tongtongan* and elders stands in sharp contrast to the contemporary Westernized tradition of ownership of land through the issuance of formal titles. In the next section, I discuss the tension between the traditional approach to land tenure and the Western(ized) concept of land ownership through titles.

### **Tensions between traditional and Westernized texts of land tenure**

*“A report reached the board of trustees that some individuals, particularly in Malico, are selling their land claims to outsiders. Together with the members of the board of trustees, [the KEF board] went to Malico to remind the people that the land was owned by the Ikalahan-Kalanguya, not by individuals. So there was a general assembly and there was a serious discussion. It was found out that there were indeed individuals who sold their claims to people of Pangasinan. The KEF chairman said ‘you should return the money. Return the money, get back your land.’ So that was the decision. We have yet to see how they will implement it though.”*

*“There was another time when a group of board of trustees members went to Pangasinan because the buyer was an influential congressman. So they went there and said ‘we are sorry but the board decision was for you to get back your*

*money and you did not buy any piece of land there.’ So the congressman felt bad. He came to Imugan one time and said, ‘I feel bad because you are not allowing me to buy land, but you are allowing people from Pangasinan to buy land!’ But we told him that those from Pangasinan also did not buy any land because the land is held communally. If people want to occupy land for a kaingin they will ask us first. We will determine if the area is possible because we do not want the swidden farm to cause erosion. Or it should not cause springs or creeks to be polluted or drained in the process.*

*“We were told that the government was encouraging the people to transfer to the lowlands. The board of trustees told them, ‘In order for us to do so, all the people in the community must transfer at the same time. They must occupy together in the same place. But if you go there and there are different people as your neighbors who are not Kalanguya or even from Imugan, there will be problems. They have a different culture, different customs and traditions.’”*

The above vignette is re-constructed from KEF member accounts concerning their work in maintaining the ancestral domain as the communal property of the Kalanguya people. The KEF had taken the lead role in adapting indigenous concepts of land use with the Westernized system of land titling practiced by formal government. The subsequent tension between the two systems required community meetings as well as meetings with influential politicians, whose experience of land ownership contradicted the traditional patterns of land use among the Kalanguya. In developing the present system used within the ancestral domain, the KEF had to develop a hybridized text that allowed for individuals to claim their kaingins with the understanding that these could only be sold within their communities. This tension thus appeared

in discursive events initiated by the KEF who understood both traditional and Westernized land tenure systems, and who also wrote the new rules with the cooperation of the elders.

The discourse on land-tenure that carries this tension had been historically argued in Philippine Jurisprudence in relation to the Regalian Doctrine (Lynch, 1982). Prior to 1902, private lands in the Philippines (as well as other Spanish colonies) were royal grants of *encomiendas* that allowed the owner to collect rents from farmers already living in the area, thus rendering them into tenants. Large areas of the archipelago operated under this feudalistic system of land tenure (Motheral, 1956). Subsequent Spanish royal decrees refined the system, allowing for *haciendas* (privately-owned plantations) and with the opening of the Philippines to international trade early in the 19th century, these territories could be bought by foreign commercial interests (Legarda, 1999). Today, like many other countries (and some US states), the Philippines practices the Torrens system of land registration (Patton, 1934; 1951; Brits, Grant & Burns, 2002). The system was derived from a similar one used by the State of Massachusetts and was one of the early reforms instituted by the American colonial authorities (Brits, Grant & Burns, 2002).

Yet, a tradition of indigenous land tenure rights has long been a part of a discourse on land tenure. Legal writing dating back to Supreme Court (both US and Philippine) rulings have argued, in one form or another, an indigenous right to land (Lynch, 1982; Molintas, 2004). In the Philippine case, through slow institutional work by NGOs and POs, indigenous land tenure was adopted as a basic principle in the 1987 Constitution, eventually leading to the IPRA (Lynch, 1992).

Thus, the Philippine legal discourse over indigenous rights has maintained a discursive tension between indigenous and Westernized systems of land tenure that is not wholly resolved.

Even within the Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain, individual plots that had been titled under the Torrens system are privileged and protected. In part because of this presence of titles maintained by the municipality, and in relation to the growing dependence on the cash economy (see Chapter 4), multiple and contradictory modes of authority have necessitated the formalization of new systems of indigenous justice (see section below).

However, the hybridization of texts surrounding indigenous and Western forms has largely been the focus of institutional work by the KEF since its inception. I describe this work in the next section.

### **KEF Institutional work in land-tenure: Authoring the Ancestral Domain**

*On a table at the KEF Dagwey Training Center is a large three-dimensional map, around three square meters, molded from synthetic materials. Through paint and colored strings, the ancestral domain of the Kalanguya is outlined and rendered as material to any observer. In relation to the surrounding forest lands, Santa Fe Poblacion and Imugan appear small at this scale. The map shows mountains, valleys, rivers, roads and human habitation. The terrain is visible through the shadows the ridges leave, and the vegetation is clearly color coded: light green marks the watershed, darker green the production forest. Bare slopes are depicted in light blue; urbanized areas such as Imugan Centro and Santa Fe Poblacion are in yellow. Black paint marks the roads. I trace my finger down the slope of the Santa Fe River as it travels down from Imugan to the fertile valley just below the poblacion, my finger clearing a trail by picking up the dust on the model.*

*I ask a KEF board member about these maps, and he explains: “The mapping here was good because we learned our practices from Western engineers. We learned how to survey and all the people were involved. The survey helped because now we knew the boundaries of the 15,000 hectares of the Kalahan Reserve. And then, now that we know how to survey, we began surveying individual plots of families. We already knew where all the lands of individual plots, but we surveyed it anyway since there were no boundaries. Knowing the boundaries minimizes quarrels among neighbors. In the past, we always had to call in the elders to settle disputes.”*

The knowledge needed to construct the map I have described in this vignette (see Figure 5.1) was developed by the indigenous rights NGO “Philippine Association for Intercultural Development” (PAFID). As explained to me by the KEF Executive Director, who works for both organizations, PAFID provides the technology -- drones, software, and skills -- and trains different indigenous POs on how to produce similar maps. That PAFID has this technology to share originates in the KEF, who initiated a tradition of conducting its own surveying activities since its inception. In the 1970s, organized by Pastor Rice, high school students from the Kalahan Academy were enlisted and trained in the techniques of traditional cadastral surveying. The earliest result was a map that helped establish MOA #1. As explained by one KEF informant who was involved in the original mapping project, the drawing of maps remains an important activity. Through these maps, the authority of elders in determining boundaries was transferred to the KEF in evaluating competing claims.





*Figure 5.1: 3-D Map of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya Ancestral Domain*

Using 3-D mapping technology, the KEF conducts its own geological surveys, and uses the map to outline their Indigenous/Cultural Community Conservation Areas (ICCAs). These areas are marked by strings on their 3-D map. The map serves the KEF and other Kalanguya POs as a visualization of their domain that comes in handy when developing plans for resource management, and in making a case for conservation. Flat maps on paper are also produced during meetings (as above), but the visual presentation of the ancestral domain is rendered all the more dynamic when one can see the terrain.

Maps and their related texts of governance are useful discursive resources when working to establish indigenous titles such as the two Kalanguya CADTs. A claim book titled “The Kalanguya-Ikalahan Ancestral Domain” with over 1,000 pages over four volumes serves as a justification for the issuance of a CADT. The book contains genealogies, maps, historical accounts, photographs of rituals and indigenous artifacts, legal resolutions on prior claims, “write

ups” of landmarks and geological features, cadastral surveys with certificates of equipment calibration, executive orders defining provincial, municipal, barangay boundaries, and almost any document that could support the Kalanguya claim to the land. A similar claim book was accomplished for the Kalanguya Ancestral Domain of the five barangays in Carranglan, Nueva Ecija. The KEF helped organize these projects, with the result being the institutionalization of a unified Kalanguya governance system among all 25 barangays of the two CADTs (see next sections).

Although most of the work to create the claim books was accomplished in the mid-2000s, the KEF continues its institutional work to construct a federation of the twenty five barangays within the two CADTs. During the first meeting of the CADT Federation, representatives from each barangay came to Imugan to begin the hard task of defining concepts, such as “elder” (see Chapter 4), that are commonsensical to the Kalanguya, yet need to be formally declared in language to suit outsiders who may potentially question their rights to the land.

As seen in the vignette that opens this section, the discourse on land-tenure is a negotiated order that requires the cooperation of various levels of governance. However, this dependence of national government protection becomes a fragile matter for the Kalanguya. The meanings of objects of discourse such as “native title” or “indigenous governance” are not held universally among government officials. Although the concept is textualized in the IPRA, the interpretation of these, and their value among different government offices, is contingent on each office to interpret, And even some of the Kalanguya would rather see a Westernized interpretation of land tenure as bringing in cash, even though the effect of such a sale would be legally dubious.

### **Authoring and the Transformation of Institutional fields**

The CADT claim books and maps of the ancestral domain are authorized texts. That is to say, the authorization these texts translate the geographic claims of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya into a set of documents and artifacts that transform the institutional field. If we understand the institutional field as a set of relationship among various actors, these embodiments of the text of the CADT transform the institutional field and reshape it through the intertextuality established in their authoring.

The institutional work of authoring these texts is not sufficient for these texts to transform the institutional field. These texts need to enter discourse as objects whose meanings are negotiated by actors. The intertextuality that links these texts, activated through dialogue, discursively (re)constitute the institutional field whenever these objects appear in discourse. The map I describe in the opening vignette materially depicts the four discourses that are the focus of this study. *Agroforestry* is rendered in paint colors, *governance* is seen in the various intersecting boundaries of types of forest, *indigeneity* is rendered in place names, and the contours of the land molded by Kalanguya hands represent *land tenure*. Yet, as clear as the map may seem, it is still an object for interpretation, and invoking this object in discourse puts discursive tensions on display. The map is also linked to the two CADTs and their related claim books; the knowledge that constructed these maps also constructed the claim-related documents. Indeed, the map itself has no power without its intertextuality.

Intertextuality, as a property of texts, reshapes the institutional field by altering the discourses that they help constitute. Prior to its authoring through documents and maps, the ancestral domains were not even texts in the minds of the Kalanguya. The concept of an ancestral domain existed only in the legal documents authored in the interest of establishing

indigenous rights, such as the IPRA. These texts of indigenous rights entered discourse in the very act of authoring; the intentionality of these documents is to establish legal claims that contradict existing claims based on previously authored texts, such as the Regalian Doctrine. Through their relationship with human actors capable of invoking these texts in dialogue, the institutional field now includes these objects in the awareness of other participants, thus transforming the network of relationships that constitute the field.

The act of authoring, by itself, has no influence on the field. However, if intentionality is written into these texts, then they are not inert objects waiting to be invoked. The very act of authoring engages other actors in the institutional field whose awareness of their intertextuality challenges their understanding of other objects in the field. This field-transforming quality of authorization may now be stated as a claim: *the authoring of texts transforms the institutional field when their intentionality is to translate the meanings of intertextually linked texts.*

Understanding this action, it becomes useful to reconceptualize institutional fields -- while noting that this discussion will avoid their reification -- as constituted in the intertextual tensions once actor become aware of these tensions during dialogic events. In order for authoring to become authorization (that is to say how texts come to coordinate understanding), the dialogic invocation of these texts also needs to be understood. In the next section, I will describe and discuss such an invocation, and the resulting tensions, in discourses of governance.

### **Tensions Within Discourses of Governance: The Tongtongan, the Barangay, and the Municipio**

*My guide and I board the KEF van to drive down from Imugan Centro to the Santa Fe poblacion. Along the way, an elder carrying a bundle of brooms waves at us looking for a ride down the mountain. He stands erect, his silver hair*

*peeking out from under his baseball cap. More silver hair flows down from his chin in the manner of many elders. He is dressed in a fashion typical of uplanders today: rainproof jacket, long sleeved t-shirt worn over short pants that reach down to his knees. He had been working and so is still wearing his high rubber boots, a bolo in a wooden sheath attached to his deerskin backpack. He tosses his brooms on the bed at the back end of the van and climbs onto the rear seat. My guide introduces him to me as Rogelio saying, "He is an elder famous for making the best brooms in Imugan." I converse with Rogelio in Tagalog.*

*"Do many elders make brooms?" I ask.*

*"Some do, but not many," he explains.*

*"How do elders make a living?"*

*"It depends, whatever you used to do when you were younger," he says while laughing, "Elders are just people who are older."*

*"How old do you have to be?"*

*"There's no specific age; usually if you are over 60."*

*"And then you become an elder?"*

*"Well, you also have to show wisdom, and be involved. If you do not show up for the tongtongan, then you are not an elder. Do you know about the tongtongan?"*

*I'm familiar with the practice but I wait and listen since I want to hear his definition.*

*"People call us to hear each side and to decide," Rogelio continues, "they respect our decisions."*

*“So you decide on all problems?”*

*”Mostly. They have to ask us. If one person has a problem with another they ask us to hold a tongtongan. It’s quicker and cheaper for them than the courts. We don’t need to bring cases to outside judges with fees and lawyers; people trust our wisdom and traditions. The province once appointed a judge down in Santa Fe poblacion. He had to leave because there were no cases,” the elder finishes explaining with a laugh. “This happened when I was a municipal councilor.”*

*“You were a councilor?”*

*“Yes,” he explains, “I was younger when the elders asked me to run. I won easily since I had the elders’ support. Not all candidates have this.”*

*After a fifteen minute drive we turn left towards the municipio (municipal seat of government). We stop in front of the inn and general store across from the municipio, which also serves as a meeting place for many of the Kalanguya from surrounding barangays. Two tables are set just off the sidewalk, where two other Kalanguya elders are sitting and sipping soft drinks through plastic straws. Rogelio climbs off the truck and greets them. He then crosses the highway to where a policeman wearing fatigues is guarding the building entrance carrying an automatic rifle. The policeman salutes the Rogelio as he enters confidently into the municipio.*

I begin this section with the vignette above in order describe the tensions between texts that appear as objects in a discourse on governance. The text of the elder in this narrative is a conflicted one. Although the elder carries no formally recognized authority by the national

government, he (they are mostly men) is obeyed by younger Kalanguya at the risk of the offender being shamed by the community. This obedience holds true for Kalanguya working within barangay and municipal government. The NCIP, through the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act, also allows for a formal recognition and preference for indigenous practices of governance.

However, other formal texts of governance “compete” with the elders in this discourse on governance, especially through the text of the barangay. Barangay authority is enabled by an ability to access municipal resources, yet are staffed by indigenous Kalanguya who maintain an obedience to the elders. Yet, elders and other community leaders have served either in the municipality or barangay as well as with the KEF. Barangay authority also derives both from a hierarchy of formal, national governance, and a willingness of the elders to collaborate with barangay councilors and staff who also happen to be their neighbors and relatives.

Finally, a text of municipal governance enters this discourse from the fact that the elders, as in the case of Rogelio, promote younger Kalanguya for municipal government. Four of the municipal councilors of Santa Fe identify as Ikalahan/Kalanguya from Imugan. The Vice-Mayor is also a Kalanguya, as are many of the municipal staff. Yet, the Mayor and other officials are originally from the lowlands and identify as either Tagalog or Ilocano.

The tensions formed by these overlapping texts of governance will be described and analyzed in the subsections that follow: the tensions between (1) indigenous governance through the *tongtongan* and barangay governance, (2) national governance and new forms of ancestral domain governance, and (3) tensions between the traditional understanding of elders and new understandings as a result of the IPRA.

## **The Tongtongan as a Text of Traditional Kalanguya Governance Conducted through Elders**

*I am on the grounds of the Mission House in Imugan to attend a tongtongan called over a case of illegal tree cutting. The defending party is a man called Burgos. He was reported to the DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Aritao as having cut trees without a permit. These trees were reportedly cut on the path of the road in anticipation of its extension from Malico to San Nicolas. The CENRO in turn decided to bring the matter over to the NCIP, who then asked the Imugan community to hold a tongtongan on behalf of a request from Burgos.*

*My informant explains to me why the KEF is involved: “He has already admitted to the illegal tree-cutting. The only thing to be decided here is the penalty. I want to see if they follow the KEF penalty guidelines, or if the elders will decide some other penalty. Our board president is here to argue that the KEF penalties should apply, and that there’s no need to continue the tongtongan since he has already admitted the guilt. So he only needs to replace the trees that were cut, and pay a fine of 1,500 pesos (\$30) per tree. But he has already donated two pigs in advance.”*

*People gradually enter the tent filling the chairs and eventually, the presider stands and speaks into a microphone, explaining how this tongtongan was called on the suggestion of the CENRO. He introduces the officer from the NCIP who is recording the meeting, and the various groups in attendance stand when called. Beginning the tongtongan, Burgos stands and makes a statement*



*explaining that he cut down those trees in order to build a house in Malico (he also has a house here in Imugan). The timber was harvested from the road, whose construction was going to cut the trees down anyway. And then, he asks, "Who here was cutting trees together with me?" Several people, some men and one woman, stand. Burgos thanks the audience and sits down. The next to speak is the KEF chairman. He makes the case that since Burgos has already accepted his guilt, the KEF only needs to impose an already known penalty, "The fine for illegal tree-cutting is one thousand five hundred pesos per tree. Since five trees were cut, the penalty should be seven thousand five hundred pesos. There is no need to discuss further since the KEF policy was accepted by the elders in the past."*

*Many other people ask for the microphone to give their opinions, a discussion that takes up the rest of the morning. After a feast (of the pigs Burgos donated), the elders begin their deliberation. Most of them are seated in the front chairs, although a couple are off to one side of the tent. There is no formal order, but each participant voices an opinion after asking the presider for the microphone. Among those who speak are Crispin and Rogelio. Crispin speaks for a longer time; he explains how the KEF has always imposed the same fines, and that the elders have accepted this way in the past. Rogelio, counters this argument by explaining that Burgos has already donated two pigs, and that the fine should be smaller to account for that. One elder notes that Burgos's donation of pigs was "payment in advance," and the elders and audience laugh at the incongruity of this idea.*

*The elders continue their dialogue for over an hour. Eventually, a consensus has been reached to follow Rogelio's suggestion; the fine has been reduced to six thousand pesos in consideration of the pigs donated for this tongtongan. I did not detect any process by which this consensus has been accomplished, but at the end, the KEF chairman and Burgos advance to the front of the audience and shake hands. True to the spirit of the tongtongan, there was no animosity and everyone in attendance remains friends.*

This vignette summarizes a *tongtongan* that took place between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on a weekday, and shows the flavor of Kalanguya dialogic events. A *tongtongan* is part trial and part feast; judgements by the elders typically include a fine in the form of one or more pigs (usually) or other livestock. The event is dialogic by intention; the *tongtongan* typically presided by a person respected by the community who is not necessarily an elder. The parties involved in the *tongtongan* are asked to state their arguments, and the public may also introduce opinions about the matter on invitation by either party. But it is the elders who eventually deliberate among themselves, as they attempt to reach a consensus decision on any penalties and actions by the community. As explained to me by several elders, spirit of the *tongtongan* is to maintain social harmony by involving the offender's family in future enforcement. The fine is usually fixed according to the ritual involved, but is also varied so the a guilty party will be in someone's (usually a relative's) debt. It is through these interlocking debts, both material and moral, that Kalanguya maintain their social order. Thus the spirit of the *tongtongan* is also meant to erase bad feelings between the parties involved; the decision made by the elders is one meant to repair the harm to the community, not simply to compensate the other party.

The tension that emerged during the discussion was whether KEF rules would simply be imposed or if the elders could override the authority they granted the KEF at the time it was established. The authority of elders to regulate the community comes from their memory of customary laws. Atonement requires a specific ritual and a fine of one pig. If the case involved adultery, a different ritual is held that requires 3 pigs and 5 chickens. If the case involves a death the ritual is much more serious and the minimum penalty is 10 pigs (Rice & Oliano, 2008). The list of penalties is retained in the collective memory of the elders, as they discuss decisions from *tongtongans* that had been held in the past. Thus, a good memory and an involvement in community affairs are valued attributes of elders.

The KEF, on the other hand, have published documents containing rules for the communities they represent. The rules are fairly straightforward; any tree-cutting requires a permit from the KEF with an endorsement by the barangay that a party is indeed a resident of the barangay. If a party is found to have disobeyed the rules, a monetary fine of 1,500 pesos is imposed on each tree with the fee collected by the KEF. Each tree must be replaced by a seedling whether or not it was cut illegally. Although the KEF authority to recommend derives from the elders, the final authority that enforces the fine is the Barangay that issued the license.

The tension emerged in discourse because, as explained to me by one KEF participant, this particular *tongtongan* is unusual in that the pigs were donated ahead of time by the accused. As my informant explained, the fact that a *tongtongan* was called over a case of tree cutting is unusual since the KEF is assumed to have authority over forest-protection in all their agreements with the DENR. However, since the offense was reported to the Community Environment and Natural Resource Office (CENRO, the local office of the DENR) in the neighboring municipality of Aritao, the affair became complicated. There had been no precedent for the DENR to act on

this type of suggestion. Being aware of the primacy of indigenous justice systems provision in the IPRA, the CENRO consulted with the NCIP in Nueva Vizcaya, who then decided that it would be necessary for a *tongtongan* to be held in Imugan.

The shift in authority from the current system to the *tongtongan* was noted to me by my informant, who explained that they wanted to see if the elders would honor the original authority they granted to the KEF. The institutional work that the KEF attempted here was the maintenance of their authority in forest governance, in partnership with the DENR. The elders however, saw the institutional work of maintenance differently; once a *tongtongan* had been called for, they could not simply cede their authority to the KEF without deliberation. The resulting penalty was something of a compromise between two competing texts. The KEF/DENR forestry management text that originated in MOA#1 document had to accommodate traditional justice systems contained in the IPRA.

But there is yet another text contained within this tension, that of the *barangay*. As the smallest regulatory body in the Philippine political system, the *barangay* bridges traditional indigenous systems with Westernized forms. The resulting hybrid further complicates the tension that appeared in the *tongtongan*.

### **The Barangay as an Alternative Text of Kalanguya Governance**

*Three days after the tongtongan of Burgos, I am attending the Imugan Barangay Assembly. The meeting is in the market area underneath the barangay offices. This audience is larger than the tongtongan; I estimate three hundred adults. Most are sitting on the same white, plastic chairs as in most meetings. Some of the audience spill onto the alley between the barangay hall and Crispin's house. A few are seated on the bed of the truck owned by the Barangay. Behind*

*the truck, the usual, very light traffic continues to move; shattering noise and the smell of petroleum exhaust from the occasional tricycle or jeep does not interrupt the meeting. Neither do the chickens wandering in from the nearby homes.*

*In front of and facing the audience is a dais where the barangay officials, mostly women, are seated. Standing to one side holding a microphone as master of ceremonies is the Barangay Captain. I recognize many of the Imugan elders and current KEF members in the audience. The agenda of this assembly is more about informing the public of decisions made in committees than it is about deliberative decision making. Three municipal ordinances are presented that had been crafted in the months past by their respective committees; printed copies of these are passed around so that as they are read the audience can follow along. The first of these is the organic gardening ordinance; the barangay is encouraging residents to develop home gardens. The second ordinance is about the control of dogs in the neighborhoods; if a home has no fence then dogs must be tied. Another ordinance formalizes barangay control over Imugan Falls. This ordinance draws some questions and suggestions; the barangay captain suggests that this go back to the committee for another draft.*

*After the discussion on ordinances, someone brings up a problem with young people painting graffiti on some walls. Crispin stands up and tells the audience that even if the barangay doesn't pass an ordinance, he will take it upon himself to scold the youngsters involved, since everyone already knows who they are. Crispin's declaration draws good-humored laughter from the audience.*

*The agenda proceeds apace until finally it's time for the KEF to speak.*

*The KEF agroforestry representative reminds the people about the rules and processes of gaining a permit to cut a tree. Someone suggests the barangay assign someone to oversee the rules in Imugan. Another person points to Burgos and suggests he be put in charge. This suggestion draws much laughter, and Burgos makes a statement rejecting the notion, which draws even more laughter from the attendees. It seems everyone in the hall knows the result of the tongtongan which was held three days ago. No one here seems to hold a grudge against Burgos as he stands on the bed of the barangay truck parked at the rear of the assembly.*

The Barangay Assembly, a portion of which I describe in the above vignette, is one of the primary means by which barangay governance is maintained. As required by the Local Government Code, these assemblies are to be held at least twice annually. Like other Kalanguya meetings, this one that I attended also took up most of the day, and like many other Kalanguya events, included a pig-feast. While most of its time was spent on local ordinances and matters, the assembly is also a time for the municipal government to communicate and remind people about the policies and services of the *municipio*. Also speaking during the assembly was the Fire Chief of Santa Fe, who reminded the audience about fire safety and how to call on the Fire Department if needed. The municipal officer from the Department of the Interior and Local Government also spoke about the programs her office is promoting. Importantly, the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (MENRO) was present to promote his program on solid waste management.

The barangay is not merely the lowest branch in the hierarchy of governance; it is also important in maintaining social harmony among residents from different groups. The Barangay

Captain heads a legislative assembly composed of barangay councilors, and maintains and staffs the barangay office, which is made available to the public at all times. Barangay ordinances are crafted in committees formed by barangay councilors and interested residents. During the pig-feast of the assembly, I sat with a councilman and an elder. They were both on the committee crafting the regulations for Imugan Falls. During our discussion, they asked me if I would join their committee in order to help draft the amendments that were suggested on the draft discussed earlier.

The invitation extended to me indicates that membership in the barangay is not strictly for the Kalanguya, but could also involve members of other identities. Although Imugan, like many interior barangays of Santa Fe, is almost uniformly Kalanguya, barangays along the national highway have many non-Kalanguya members as residents. Tagalog, Ilocano, and Visaya residents, as well one Japanese, are all residents who belong to the barangay in nearby Bacneng. Poblacion also has many Ilocano and Tagalog residents, including the Mayor of Santa Fe, who is Ilocano.

Unlike the cultural/moral authority of the elders, the authority of the Barangay Captain of Imugan does not extend beyond Imugan. Barangays are defined by the same colonial logic of boundaries between regions, provinces, and municipalities. Yet, as will be seen in a later section, the logic of the KEF initiated Federation of Ancestral Domain CADT Holders revolves around clusters of barangays, of which the KEF operates as the PO on behalf of cluster 1. The hybridized authority that is being developed is done partly to overcome the tensions between barangay and elder authority.

But the barangay captain also occupies a precarious location. While they have authority over the barangay, the barangay also exists within the matrix of the municipal government.

## **Tensions between Barangay and Municipal Government**

*The barangay Centro of Bantinan is small compared to Imugan, but the barangay has more residents overall. The Centro is located on the edge of the Caraballo range as it flattens out into the Marang River basin. We are well into the dry season, and the weather has turned hot and muggy. As our truck turns right off the main road, we hear pop music blaring from loudspeakers.*

*Most of the municipal council is here, together with the mayor and administrative officials. This event is being held underneath the covered basketball court at the remote barangay Bantinan in Santa Fe. I have been invited to attend by the KEF Chairman, who is also a municipal councilor, and he drove our truck that made the 30 minute journey to Bantinan. Sitting on plastic chairs facing the grandstand are around one hundred spectators. Many of them are elders in green t-shirts with "senior citizen" printed on the back. Along one side of the basketball court are tables for other other municipal staff and a sound system. The "little mayor" (the mayor's executive assistant) is operating the sound system. He sees me and waves at me, inviting me to sit with him.*

*On the dais is a large table where some of the five Santa Fe municipal council members are seated, together with the Mayor and Vice-Mayor. I recognize three of the council members from Imugan. One by one, the municipal councilors stand at the podium explaining municipal programs that each is in charge of: engineering, education, environment, etc. The third to speak is the KEF chairman -- also a municipal councilor -- who reminds the audience about the importance of the day. Today is arbor day and there are several tree-planting*



*programs around Santa Fe. He speaks about the municipality's commitment to the environment and forests.*

*The last to speak is the Mayor. Speaking Ilocano, she thanks again the audience for their hospitality and patience in listening to the various presenters. After her remarks, the Mayor calls on the barangay council of Bantinan to congratulate them. They are dressed like the Mayor in casual jeans and official t-shirts with the municipal logo. The barangay captain, a woman, makes a short remark, after which the mayor walks along the line shaking the hand of each barangay official. The formal part of the program is over as the people engage in a community dance (including the mayor and this author) followed by the obligatory pig-feast. As we eat, an Ilocano folk song blares from the loudspeaker system.*

*After the feast, the mayor takes the microphone again and acknowledges the senior citizens in their green t-shirts. The Mayor and Vice-Mayor stand on the concrete floor below the dais as the elders line up to receive a gift of uncooked rice in a plastic bag.*

The event I describe in the above vignette is a program of the municipality called “Munisipyo<sup>40</sup> sa Barangay” (Municipal Hall at the Barangay). The municipal council of Santa Fe visits each of the sixteen barangays that constitute the municipality at least once annually. As is typical, the event called for a feast and community dancing. The flavor of the event conformed with Kalanguya celebratory rituals, but was also sprinkled with the accepted artifacts and performances of Westernized national government, such as the making of speeches at a podium.

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<sup>40</sup> This is the official rendering in Filipino by the municipal government.

The Kalanguya flavor may be placed in tension with the municipal texts performed during the event. In Kalanguya governance, the position of the elder has an important function, and the elder is assumed to be a person of authority. In the hybridized text of municipal events, “Senior Citizen” emblazoned on a t-shirt operates as a text originating in national laws that activate resources for persons over 65, such as discounts on products and services, exemptions on paying sales taxes, and free medical care. Thus, the Kalanguya elder is no longer a person with governance functions. Rather, it is assumed that elders are “retired” persons in need of assistance, such as discounts and gifts. This giving of gifts to elders is not a Kalanguya tradition. Gift-giving is an old tradition from the politics of pre-colonial polities (Junker, 1999), which continues on wherever municipal mayors have replaced *datus* (chiefs, see Chapter 6). According to one informant who also witnessed the event, the giving of individual gifts to specific individuals -- in this case the barangay elders -- means that the mayor is savvy in Philippine municipal politics, but not necessarily in Kalanguya culture. Although, he notes, the donation of a pig by the mayor whenever possible is something the Kalanguya appreciate as within their own tradition.

The tension that results from this hybridization of texts may also be seen in how the KEF must navigate power relations between Kalanguya identifying municipal councilors, the traditional authority of the elders, and the authority of the municipality. Municipalities provide resources such as national funds from taxes, police and fire stations, a medical clinic, public schools, and (importantly) solid waste management services and guidance. The last of these is managed through the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (MENRO). Although the office has little say in forestry management, they maintain programs with appropriate funding for a number of activities that the KEF and the elders do not manage. Rather,

municipal texts of governance become the responsibility of barangay governance. Kalanguya municipal councilors are thus placed in a position of having to balance municipal understandings of the elders and barangay traditions, with the texts that guide municipal governance in the form of national laws.

This tension is felt most acutely in Imugan where several municipal councilors (and the Vice Mayor) are related to barangay officials, KEF management, as well as with the elders. The acuteness of this tension is felt the most by the KEF chairman. In order to relieve some of these tensions, the KEF board agreed that the current chairman resign his position while he is a municipal councilor. The chairman complied with the suggestion and the vice-chairman took over. However, despite the relatively easy resolution of this instance, the tension between governance systems requires the KEF to do continuous institutional maintenance work in dialogic events that involve competing models of authority.

### **KEF Institutional Work over Tensions between the Authority of National Hierarchy and Traditional Elder Authority**

Although dealt with through humor and neighborliness, tensions between the national hierarchy of governance, the precarious position of the barangay, and the traditional texts of elder governance are apparent in the vignettes in the earlier subsections. The KEF maintains its authority over Ikalahan/Kalanguya communities through an original decision made by the elders. Yet as seen in the first vignette, the elders heard Burgos's case and modified the fine despite formal KEF policy. However, the referral of the case is based on the IPRA and its respect for traditional forms of authority. To complicate matters, the barangay government collaborates with the KEF in issuing permits for tree-cutting and *kaingin*. KEF authority thus derives partly from the elders, partly from the barangay, and partly from the forestry management agreements that

created the KEF as an entity. The logic of this configuration is also based on the barangay, since members of the KEF board of trustees are chosen through the barangays that compose it.

The barangay is in a unique position of occupying a site of tension between traditional Kalanguya and national political systems. The barangay is a governmental unit that sources its authority from the text of the Philippine Constitution. It must also collaborate with the municipio of which it composes an integral part. Traditional Kalanguya authority, where the relationship between elders and that barangay government come into are complicated by personal relationships. As seen in the barangay assembly at Imugan, traditional authority is not overtly expressed in the meeting, yet elders cede authority to the barangay Captain whenever governance involves a relationship with the texts of national laws. The KEF presence in these meetings also involves a balance between traditional and barangay governance. While the KEF can monitor agroforestry practice and impose fines, and issue permits, the barangay endorsement is also needed.

Finally, tensions between municipio and the KEF is felt by KEF board members and staffers who must navigate multiple modes of authority. The formal governmental power of the municipio to define the status of elders and the actions of KEF officers creates difficulties for the latter organization.

The KEF institutional work conducted to manage these tensions lies largely in their maintenance of the hybridized authority granted to them through both the barangay and the elders. Through the institutionalization of their role in forest conservation, they have also drawn their authority from the original documents that constituted the alliance between the Kalanguya elders and the DENR. Yet the institutionalization of their role also had to depend on the barangay captain's ability to draw on municipal resources of enforcement. That Burgos was able

to be included in a joke about barangay level forestry governance points to how this blended authority between the KEF and the barangay needs continuous reinforcement at the barangay level. Yet, KEF actions can also be constrained when the municipio co-opts the indigenous authority of the elders and the KEF.

### **The Dialogic Authorization of Texts**

As discussed in the previous section, intertextual relationships, once written into texts, are invoked in dialogue as participants dialogically negotiate the meanings of texts in discourse. The dialogic transformation of institutional fields involve what Maguire and Hardy (2010) call *field-configuring events*, which provide multiple discursive spaces for authoring, consumption, and distribution of texts.<sup>41</sup> Thus, even as institutional fields are transformed by the textual actors that have an intentionality of transformation written into them, dialogic events are also necessary for these meanings to accomplish such a transformation isomorphically across the field.

Part of this isomorphic distribution of meaning involves the establishment of the authoritative relationships among different texts. The sensemaking conducted during dialogic events is, as Weick (1997) would claim, are efforts to decrease equivocation as understandings of authoritative relationships are discussed, negotiated, and agreed on (at least to a reasonable extent such that equivocation is minimized). In the case discussed above, the discursive tensions between the governmental texts of national hierarchy and elder governance invokes contradictory textual representations of the role of elders. That elders can simultaneously be the

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<sup>41</sup> Following a tradition in the discourse theories of institutionalization, Maguire and Hardy (2010) make reference to *narratives*, whose definition as "meaning structure that organizes events and human actions into a whole, thereby attributing significance to individual actions and events according to their effect on the whole" (c.f. Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 18). Here, consistent with Montreal School theorizing, I avoid calling these "structures" and favor the term "texts" as defined earlier (see Ashcraft, Kuhn, and Cooren, 2009)..

bearers of Kalanguya legal tradition and “senior citizens” beholden to the *municipio* for gifts, emphasizes how intertextual relationships include a dimension of negotiated authority.

The claim I am proposing here, in partial response to RQ3, is that the authoring of a hybridized indigenous text, includes a negotiation of the authoritative relationships among actors in the institutional field. That is to say that institutional texts are always subjected to a negotiated, authoritative order in the process of sensemaking and legitimation. In formal terms, the claim here is that *the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts involves the negotiation of authoritative order between competing texts.*

Although the institutional work of the KEF is primarily over maintaining their authority over the Kalahan Forest and an internal system of plots, in one particular dialogic event, a different tension appeared. In this case, the tension was over differing interpretations of texts that guarantee indigenous governance within the ancestral domain. I discuss this tension in the next section.

### **Tensions from the Interdiscursivity between Governance and Indigeneity**

*I am at the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative (IPMR) election. The assembly hall at Forest Park is rapidly filling up. People are lining up to register for the event. I recognize many folks from Imugan, as well as from other Kalanguya communities I had visited recently. But this event is not only for the Kalanguya of Santa Fe; there are separate sign-in sheets for Kalanguya-Ikalahan, Iwak, Ibaloi/Kankanaey, Ayangan/Tuwali, and a final sheet for Guests/Visitors/Other ICCs/IPs. I line up and sign my name on the registry in the last group. I enter the hall with its 200 or so plastic chairs quickly becoming occupied. I see the KEF ED on a table facing the podium in front of the chairs.*

*He is busy on his laptop. There are other people from Imugan who recognize me and invite me to sit with them at their table along one side of the hall.*

*The morning session begins with an explanation by the NCIP facilitator on the legal basis for the election to be held today. She displays slides showing appropriate sections of the IPRA, as well as the guidelines and implementing rules issued by the NCIP. Importantly, among these guiding texts is an imperative to follow indigenous practices of governance. As soon as she is done, the KEF representatives stand to plead the case that this meeting is an improper way to select a representative. "The Kalanguya in Santa Fe all belong to the same ancestral domain and the representative should be chosen through indigenous systems of governance. Since the Kalanguya-Ikalahan are in the process of developing new organizational structures to govern their CADT, the decision on who to represent the Kalanguya in Santa Fe should be by a General Assembly of all the ancestral domain stakeholders and chosen under their own rules.*

*Supporting the representative on this request is a former Santa Fe Vice Mayor -- also a Kalanguya -- who explains that he and other Kalanguya councilors are against today's election. Since there is no budget allocation for the IPMR stipend, they request that the election be delayed until the municipality of Santa Fe can allocate the funds.*

*The NCIP facilitator asks the crowd for other opinions. Other members of the Kalanguya community chime in. One man comments that elections may not be the best way to choose a representative, since it is customary to make decisions by consensus among elders. Another stands to suggest that all three candidates from*

*the Kalanguya are acceptable, and that it would make sense to simply draw lots. The NCIP facilitator asks what the sixteen barangays think. One by one as they are called, each barangay sends their barangay captain or representative to give an opinion. After all had spoken, the NCIP facilitator determines that a consensus of the barangays agree that the election should be held as planned.*

The vignette above describes an event where national, municipal, and barangay texts of governance are invoked in dialogue and come into tension with Kalanguya texts of indigenous governance. Both texts came into discourse already hybridized to a degree; at the time of the Spanish advent, barangays adapted to the needs of colonial governance, yet maintained many of the institutional features seen in local government today (Junker, 1999; Constantino, 1975). Yet, the hybridized text of the barangay is simultaneously translated into different visions of indigenous governance that came into being from texts of the 1987 Constitution and the IPRA. On the part of the KEF and other Kalanguya POs of the ancestral domain, their version of indigenous governance borrowed from existing texts of governance when the barangay was chosen as the basis for distributing authority. The NCIP, on the other hand, attempted to promote their preferred understanding in the mode of selection on how an indigenous representative to the municipal council is to be chosen. During the dialogue, the KEF, on behalf of the other CADT Holders POs, wanted to establish a rule that ran counter to that of the NCIP's. The NCIP appeal to the barangay officials have made this decision embodied the NCIP understanding of the barangay in relation to indigenous governance. Barangay captains and representatives were assumed to represent the interests of those indigenous people residing within barangay boundaries. As far as the KEF and the other CADT stakeholder POs are concerned, indigenous governance is whatever their community decides to do, as ratified by their member POs. The



discourse on indigeneity that was prominent in the dialogue thus produced tensions on what “indigenous governance” might mean, and which group is allowed to decide on this meaning.

In the sections that follow, I describe: (1) how the tension over interpretations of indigenous governance is based on different texts of governance between the national government and the indigenous Kalanguya, and (2) the institutional work that the KEF and other POs within the combined CADT had been performing in order to legitimize their preferred text of governance over that of the national government.

### **The Tensions in the Interpretation of Indigenous Governance**

*After the feast, people begin lining up to vote. I re-enter the assembly hall to observe and take notes. One of the NCIP officials waves me over to sit at their official table. “You can be a public observer” he says to me smiling. He is aware of who I am and my purpose here since we had encountered each other in previous dialogues that involved the NCIP and the KEF. Another government official joins our table; she is the Santa Fe officer for the Department of the Interior and Local Governments (DILG). We remember each other from the Imugan Barangay Assembly. We had not had the opportunity to speak during the assembly, so I ask her what her function is within the municipio. “My position here is independent of the municipio,” she explains, “but I’m here to represent the DILG, especially during local elections like this.” From past interactions, I know that the NCIP official works for the Nueva Vizcaya branch and is here for the same reason. The three of us are “observers” of the process.*

*People are lining up to vote. A chalkboard has been turned away from the group to hide the growing tally of votes until all votes have been cast. One by one,*

*voters approach the chalkboard, maintaining a respectful distance from the chalkboard, until it is their turn. It's a slow process with only one vote being tallied at a time. The NCIP and DILG officials are busy with small talk. Although I am also an "observer" I prefer to join their conversation, which ranges from the best restaurants in Santa Fe (there are only a few) to Hollywood movies. Unlike most people here, the two officials are more conversant in Tagalog than Ilocano, which reflects their education from Manila universities. Their Tagalog accent is the one I am most familiar with, which I also tend to use.*

*Finally, all the votes are cast. The mayor's candidate has more than twice the votes of the other candidate (a third candidate had dropped out prior to the election). He makes a short speech thanking the crowd, promising to represent all the indigenous people in Santa Fe. After him, the KEF chairman stands to congratulate him and makes a short speech. I'm not sure whether he is speaking as KEF chairman or as municipal councilor. Perhaps it does not matter since the winning candidate is also a municipal employee, a former KEF member, and a cousin to the KEF chairman.*

This vignette describes a tension over authority that was discursively produced through competing texts of governance. The NCIP's original rules on the IPMR were the ones implemented, thus, an election was held instead of other methods of choosing a representative. As explained to me by one KEF board informant, there was no objection to the winning candidate. He was an active member of the community and likely to eventually be considered an elder by the standards of the Kalanguya. However, KEF board members were unhappy that the

system of governance developed by the Ikalahan/Kalanguya themselves was not allowed to be used as a method of choosing the IPMR.

The tension analyzed in this section, arises through the interdiscursivity of texts shared by discourses of indigeneity and governance whose meanings are dis-aligned. The NCIP interpretation of terms such as “indigenous governance” in the IPRA comes into tension with the Kalanguya when there is a confusion over texts of authority, such as in the position of the IPMR. The NCIP interpretation assumes that a single indigenous person may claim to represent all of the indigenous people who happen to reside within a municipality, which brings different boundary systems into their discourse on governance.

The Kalanguya text of “indigenous governance” through elders has no higher-order political structures than that of the *sitio* (settlement), and is based on deliberation and consensus among elders. The irony that an election was held despite indigenous claims to their own methods of choosing representatives, led to one ironic remark by a KEF board member “maybe they’ll also ask us to elect a *datu*.” The institution of the *datu* (chief) is practiced by some indigenous groups, and is primarily an authoritarian form in a stratified social structure (Junker, 1999; Jocano, 1998; Constantino, 1975). The Kalanguya and many other Igorot groups, on the other hand, prefer authority to be distributed among their elders (see Chapter 4). Among the Kalanguya in Imugan, only one elder in their living memory had ever held the title “datu” (see Chapter 6), and even then, he did not have authority on his own but needed the consensus of other elders. Even the barangay is a foreign institution for the Kalanguya; the contemporary form of the barangay, despite its indigenous origins, was a creation of the 1987 Constitution carried over from a history of colonialism. Thus, although the KEF and other POs objected to the idea of holding an election organized by outside agencies (the NCIP and the *municipio*.) The *municipio*

co-opted the decision-making process by calling on barangay captains to decide. This move bypassed the actual indigenous models of governance that were in the process of being developed by the KEF and other POs in the Ikalahan/Kalanguya ancestral domain.

The KEF, through consultations at the barangay level with other POs and elders, had been developing these structures around the institution of the barangay. By the time I left the scene, the planning and consultations had led to the formal constitution of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation. I describe this process in the next section.

### **The Institutional Work of Constructing a Hybrid Indigenous Text of Governance**

*I am at an organizational meeting of Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation. Around twenty representatives from each the five cluster POs are attending. Chairs had been arranged facing a chalkboard on which the KEF ED is busy writing. On a left column is the meeting agenda. A second column on the right. The highest box in the chart reads “General Assembly.” Right below the first sign is solid line that hits a bar with five more solid lines underneath it. Each line points to numbers 1 through 5, a reference to the cluster system. From the higher solid lines are two dotted lines pointing to two other boxes. The first box reads “support groups” and the other reads “Consultative Body / Council of Elders.”*

The development of new, hybrid texts of governance portrayed in the above vignette is a literal construction of a text. The constituting texts of the federation are contained in their “Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.” The document contains organizationally-related objects such as the organizational chart of the CADT (see Figure 5.2), its member POs and their constituting barangays, and the authority and functions of each sub-unit.

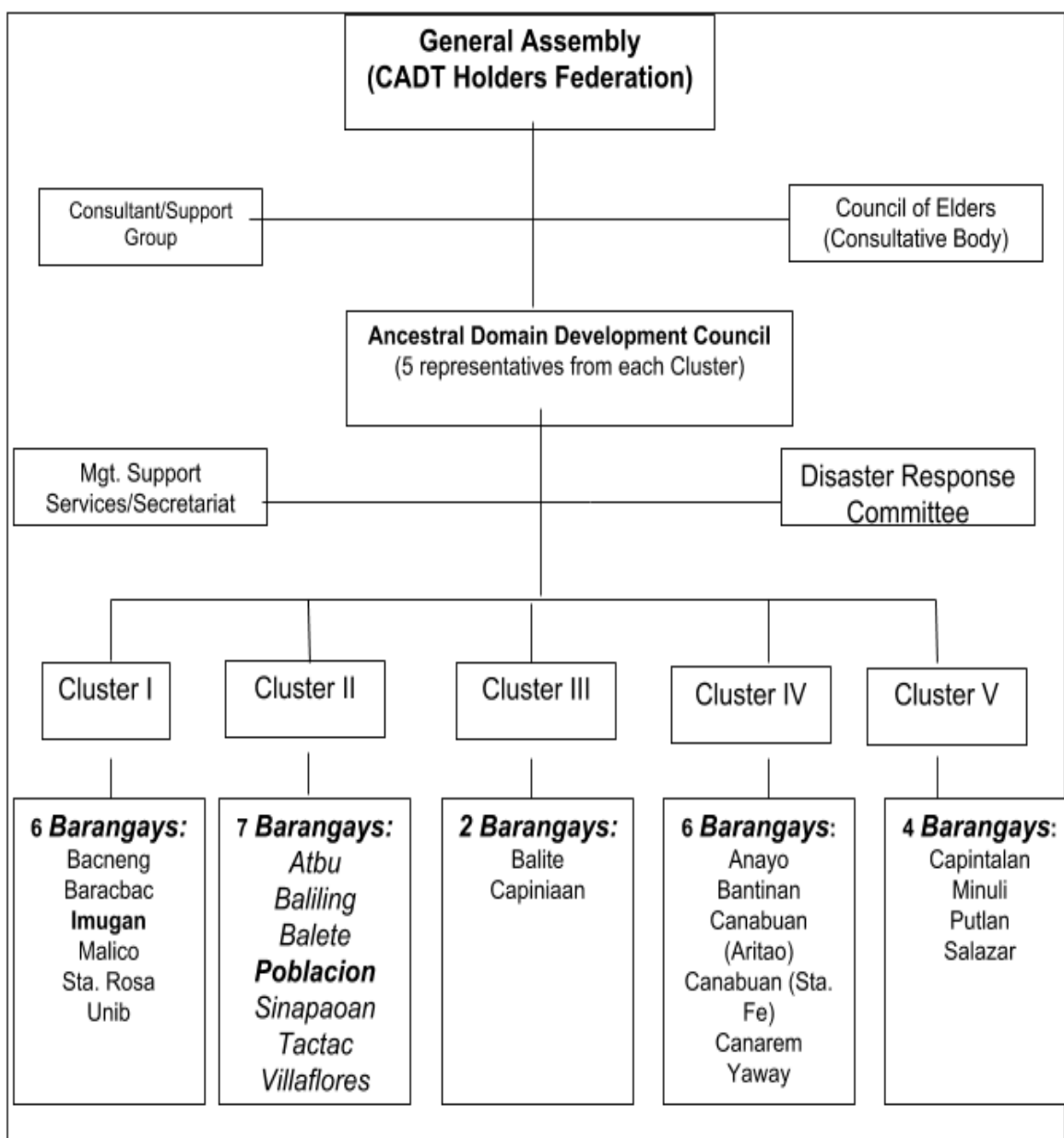


Figure 5.2 Organizational Structure of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya CADT Holders Federation

The General Assembly at the top of the chart is described in the by-laws as “the supreme authority in the organizational structure,” and is constituted during general meetings. Just below it is the Ancestral Domain Development Council (ADDC) composed of 5 representatives from

each cluster. As describe in the by-laws, the composition of the ADDC is meant to balance the interests of different authorities:

Of the five (5) Council Members coming from each Cluster organization, Two (2) must come from the Cluster organization officers; Two (2) must come from the Elders; and One (1) from among the Barangay Council members. One (1) representative of the Elders must be a woman. Each Cluster organization is enjoined to distribute and spread the representations from its member Barangays.

What is interesting about the ADDC is that it balances traditional authority of the elders (while promoting women), the POs, and the barangays, in so doing, decenter and subsume these authorities under a General Assembly of the Kalanguya people within the CADT. The ability to do this is contained in the IPRA, a document that enables a principle contained in the Philippine Constitution. Doing so required a formal framing of the term “Council of Elders,” an institution the Kalanguya did not previously perform, and a formalized definition of the word “elder” as hybridized indigenous texts.

The creation of these new governance texts shows the deliberative quality of KEF institutional work. The role of the KEF in developing this structure cannot be understated, but in order to gain consensus, the different POs and their constituent barangays had to be consulted in a series of dialogic events. Individual POs of each cluster are incorporated independently of the KEF (which is just one among five POs). As a result, the organization of barangay-level consultations, federation organizational meetings, and even the planning for the first general meeting of the CADT Federation at the Dagwey Training Center in Imugan, had to be accomplished through consultative dialogues.

At the same time, the KEF understands that it lacks the organizational resources to act as a manager for the entire CADT; the ongoing project needs the cooperation of the other POs as well as the barangays. One barangay captain, who had worked with the KEF and is also an elder, explained to me that maintaining the forest requires the barangay to patrol the roads leading down the forest to prevent poaching. Ever since its original incarnation as an entity to enter into a contract to manage a forest and operate an indigenous, the KEF has been chronically short of resources. Even now, the Kalahan Academy is also short of instructors, as they cannot pay a competitive salary to retain professional teachers. The agroforestry team, although well-trained in the science of forestry, currently consists of only five foresters who need to maintain their authority over the entire Kalahan Reserve and Production forest. The responsibility of defending the Kalahan Reserve, production forest, and claims to indigenous governance are, thus, distributed to all the barangay clusters in a manner that created a single, democratically managed entity, a new structure constituted through a new text.

### **The Formal Authorization of Hybridized Indigenous Texts**

The intentional authoring of a hybridized text of governance agrees with Kuhn's (2008) definition of an authoritative text:

This "authoritative text" emphasizes the relations of legitimacy and power characterizing firm practice. It also depicts the firm's structure in a way that specifies activities and outcomes, what knowledge is valued, and roles, duties, and authority. . . In this sense, it is a conception of the "official" firm (p. 1236).

Noting that the organizational structure in figure 5.2 agrees with this definition, the inevitable conclusion is that the intentionality of the Kalanguya in the authoring of this text is to hybridized the authoritative text of the elders in terms of Westernized formal authority. The neologisms

present in the document attest to the translational modes of sensemaking and legitimation. The document embodies an intertextuality that links elder to barangay in formal terms, while decentering the elder in favor of new authoritative forms.

These features of the new authoritative text of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya are intended to legitimize the authority of indigenous governance over the combined CADTs. This authority is accomplished despite the continuous presence of contradictory authoritative texts of national governance and their resulting tensions. What the continued presence of contradictory authority indicate is a reminder that the isomorphism of texts within the institutional field is always imperfect and contingent on localized meanings that emerge from their implementation. The understandings of the organizational structure of the CADT Holders Federation are, consistent with Kuhn's (2008) conceptualization, a reference point for the alignment of local interests with the larger conception of an ancestral domain. However, the latter concept is a translation of the texts of the Regalian Doctrine that passes formal authority from national government to local indigenous governance. Thus colonial governance is never wholly extinguished since its texts intertextually lend their authority to the new organization. The equivocation of this authoritative order is, thus, requires the constant negotiation and reinterpretation among formal texts that continuously challenges indigenous authority.

This dialectical relationship between authoritative texts is inevitable and to be expected whenever the authority of these texts are invoked in dialogue. Thus, the final claim in this study reads, *equivocation of authoritative order is never wholly resolved through the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts as these are subject to continuous negotiation in dialogue.*



### **Conclusion: Authority, Authoring, and Authorization as Relational Phenomena**

This chapter depicts how tensions between the discourses of land-tenure and governance are linked intertextually with a discourse on indigeneity. This linkage is accomplished through the intentional authoring of hybrid texts that draw from the texts invoked in different discourses. As Kuhn (2008) claims, textual authority projects in time and space through the invocation of texts in discursive practices. It is precisely through interdiscursivity and intertextuality that Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) locate the processes of institutionalization. Institutions are, thus, an effect of the interpellation of texts that convey authority through the sensemaking and legitimation developed among human actors in dialogue. The formal authoring of texts, is thus, a contingent and negotiated order where the authority of hybridized indigenous texts is always partial, contradictory, and contingent as actors invoke the text in dialogue.

The examination of the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts in this chapter is, like the previous chapter, organized according to discursive tensions. Three discursive tensions were explored here: (1) between traditional and formal/legal interpretations of land tenure, (2) between the traditional legal system of the Kalanguya elders and that of formal, legal Philippine government, and (3) between competing interpretations of indigenous authority. Each of these tensions have resulted from intertextual equivocation over the meaning of discursive objects such as governance and land tenure.

In the first tension, KEF institutional work is largely seen in its members appropriation of Western mapping technologies. The practices of cadastral survey used by the KEF has kept pace by the intertextual linkage of Western techniques and technologies into their own texts of land tenure. By appropriating the logic of boundaries from Western concepts of land use, which was necessary in the creation of CADT titles, the KEF and other POs are able to activate these maps

as discursive resources in dialogue. Thus, the first claim “the authoring of texts transforms the institutional field when their intentionality is to translate the meanings of intertextually linked text” extends the modalities of translation to include an intentional intertextuality in the process of authorization of hybridized institutional texts.

The second tension was produced through contradictions developed between different modes of governance. The dialogic traditions of the elders contradicts Westernized notions of hierarchical levels of governance. The tension appears most acutely at the local level when barangay captains must align the interests of their barangays with either the authority of the elders or that of the national governmental hierarchy. Here, KEF institutional work is largely one of maintenance. By attending community events, the KEF intentionally challenges municipal authority over the barangay as a hybrid text. The intertextual links between their collaboration with the barangay does not always work, as evidenced in the conduct of the IPMR election. Yet, abandoning their presence is not an option as their ongoing project of new texts of authority that incorporate the barangay must be introduced into discourse in order to activate their inclusion into conversations. Thus the second claim, “the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts involves the negotiation of authoritative order between competing text.” Negotiating this order is, thus, a primary function of authoring texts.

The third tension between competing texts of indigeneity is interdiscursively linked with the discourse on governance. By drawing on a logic of governance through local assemblies composed of clusters of barangays, the KEF maintains an interdiscursivity between governance and indigeneity. In order to project authority through hybridity, the KEF constructs new texts that challenge alternative interpretations of “indigenous governance.” The CADT Holders Federation is constituted precisely through the construction of hybrid texts that grant authority.

This authority becomes actualized through the appropriation of neologisms contained in the IPRA, seen especially in their translation of the phrases “council of elders” and “development council” that derive from Western understandings. Yet, since these neologism are never wholly commensurable and maintain an equivocality among different actors in the institutional field, I make a third claim that “the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts involves the negotiation of authoritative order between competing texts.”

In summary, KEF institutional work is largely an effort to mitigate the results of 400 years of colonial authority introduced into their discourse by the sudden onset of new technologies such as roads, maps, and boundaries. It is precisely in constructing interdiscursive and intertextual networks contained within new, hybridized texts that indigenous systems of land tenure and governance may be retained as part of a Kalanguya identity. By claiming these hybrid texts and locating them in the form of a Western-inspired organizational chart, mapping technology, and through their discourse during dialogic events, the Kalanguya text then “projects particular conceptions of structure and responsibility” (Kuhn, 2008, p. 1236) across time and space. The newly authoritative text of the CADT Holders Federation as an organization, claims the original colonial authority of the Regalian Doctrine, thereby aligning their interests by referring to a long-dead Spanish monarch, even as the equivocation contained in such an authoritative order can never be wholly resolved.

## Chapter 6

## Conclusion: Dialogue, Translation, and the Authoring of Institutions



*Figure 6.1: The crypt of the old datu of Imugan*

*From the main road in Imugan, I climb up the hill path past the last row of houses. The path levels off and I am standing at beside the crypt of the old datu of Imugan (Figure 6.1). His grave is a concrete block, around a meter high, with artillery shell casings marking its four corners. The top of the crypt is sloped and a cross stands at one end. Surrounding the crypt is a stand of pine trees. Through the tree trunks and dense foliage, I see the houses of Imugan Centro approximately 30 meters below this spot. Scratched in rough letters on one side of the concrete block are the words, "Datu of Imugan N.V." Just below, the full personal name of the old datu is scratched in the same lettering.*

*After paying my respects, I continue hiking up the trail southwards. Were I to follow this trail to its end, I would be among large dipterocarps in the Kalahan Reserve near the headwaters of the Santa Fe and Nasiaan rivers. From a clearing, I see the tallest of the unnamed peaks of the reserve in the distance. It rises above 1,700 meters (5,600 feet) and is crowned with dipterocarps.*

According to Ikalahan/Kalanguya oral history, the burial of the *datu* took place in the late 1950s. The *datu* had been a guerilla leader fighting the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II. After the war, he became so esteemed as an elder that people began referring to him as “datu,” (whose complicated meaning in the Kalanguya context I describe below.) As *datu* of Imugan, he contacted the Philippine Methodist Church and requested that they send over a pastor, thus beginning the serious Westernization of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya in Santa Fe.

I relate the vignette above in order to show how the hybridization of Kalanguya culture is an ongoing project that predates its most recent phase of Westernization and the KEF. The word “datu” rarely entered discourse during my observations in Imugan. Instead, the word is sourced from Tagalog, and is variously translated as “leader,” “chief,” or even “monarch” (Scott, 1994), concepts which do not appear in the daily discourse of the Kalanguya. During dialogic events, one sometimes hears the term “Community Leader” used by national government officials. It is used as a mark of acknowledgement for individuals who do not otherwise hold an official title, as is the case with most elders. But even that English term does not describe the status of the old *datu*, a title whose prestige seems to derive from its rarity in Kalanguya culture. *Datus* are referred to in early Spanish accounts of colonization (Scott, 1990), as well as in present day politics in Mindanao, that describe various stratified societies in the Philippines (Jocano, 2001; Junker, 1990). Among pre-colonization Tagalogs, the term was historically used to designate the

leader of a barangay, which was then institutionally translated into the neologism “*cabeza de barangay*” (barangay head) by Spanish colonial authorities as the lowest tier of their hierarchy of colonial administration -- a function that is still accomplished today in the present-day “*barangay captain*.” Thus, the appearance of the term “datu” among the Kalanguya of Imugan, marks an early and ongoing hybridization of Kalanguya with Western culture. The appropriation of this exonym reflects layers of history associated with colonization, which the Kalanguya found useful during the period of the datu’s life. The grave marks both the life and death of an individual, as well as symbolizing an already hybridized past that the Kalanguya remember but do not necessarily apply to present-day needs.

As a culturally useful symbol, the term *datu* also evokes the resilience of the Ikalahan/Kalanguya in adapting to a changing discourse that continues to invoke the texts of the Regalian Doctrine. Their oral history of resilience and resistance continues to inform the institutional work of the present-day Ikalahan/Kalanguya as an ongoing project, which is reflected in many of the decisions they made during my period of observation.<sup>42</sup> What is implied by the story is that institutional work has always been part of a changing institutional field that indigenous people have had to engage with in order to survive colonization and neo-colonialism.

This concluding chapter uses the language of institutional theory and organizational discourse in order to describe the institutional work depicted in the previous two chapters. To recall, following Maguire and Hardy (2010), organizational discourse performed as “institutional work” involves texts that reconfigure their related institutional fields. Institutional work is described in terms of the *construction*, *distribution*, and *consumption* of texts. To existing understandings of this process, this study provides an alternative interpretation of texts; here

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<sup>42</sup> While this project does not pretend to relate their full oral history, I felt it important to note that the institutional work among the Kalanguya people is not a new phenomenon.

texts are actors within the institutional field. To the extent that texts themselves help sustain the field points to their function as institutionalized texts. Institutions are durable to the extent that they are reproduced by human actors, but to that human agency must also be added the influence that texts exert on humans. In terms of the Regalian Doctrine, the textual agency constituted through the originary authority of a long-since-gone monarch, and represented by an expeditionary captain general -- both “authors” and “authorizes”-- colonial rule through an intertextual relationship with newly formed, hybridized texts. Recognizing the agency of texts, and how they can (re)configure institutional fields, helps to explain a number of problems identified in literatures that see institutions and institutionalization as means to explain phenomena that cut across numerous organizations.

In this study, I have argued that not only have the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF) ensured the survival of the Kalahan Reserve, but that they have intentionally constructed - along with related organizations -- a text that restructures the institutional field concerned with collaborative management of that particular forest, as well as forestry in general. In this section, and in reference to the research questions posed at the end of chapter 2, I will summarize the findings of this study in terms of institutional work performed as dialogue and translation. Here, I will highlight , through the order of research questions, (1) how discourse practices of dialogue and translation lead to the authoring of hybridized indigenous texts, (2) how discursive tensions evident in dialogic events dealing with the discourses of agroforestry, indigeneity, land tenure, and governance have led to the authoring of hybridized indigenous texts, and (3) how through the authoring of hybridized institutional texts, intertextual relationships are reconstituted in ways that reconfigure the institutional field.

### **Dialogue and Translation and the Authoring of Texts**

In this section, I explicate partial answers to RQ1 by synthesizing three claims. Dialogue and translation are processes of institutionalization conducted through (1) hybridization through the use of neologisms, (2) translation through the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004)

#### **Hybridizing Existing Texts with Neologisms**

In Chapter 4, I make that claim that “The authoring of texts hybridizes older ritual texts with intentionally authored written texts in order to disrupt competing texts.” Hybrid texts are not simply a haphazard arrangement of objects of discourse; in their intentionality, the author of a new institutional text proceeds from an understanding of a competing text that must be disrupted. In the example from Chapter 4, the agroforestry team’s awareness of the rituals of sayote meant their authoring of alternatives. As read by the KEF, as well as foresters from the DENR, the monoculture of sayote “plantation” is harmful in that it reduces the diversity of the forest and threatens the future viability of the soil. Because of the investment involved in the installation of trellises, and because sayote yields a steady cash flow from the sale of its fruits, forest farmers are not encouraged to rotate fields as was the traditional practice of the kaingin. The KEF response has been to encourage alternative, more sustainable cash crops, especially organic vegetable farming. The KEF, of course, did not invent “organic vegetable farming” but their appropriation of this ritual text from an already-Westernized agricultural tradition that includes neologisms such as “composting” shows the beginning of a hybridization of their ritual farming texts.

A similar case can be made for the organizational chart of the CADT Federation. The neologism “council of elders” competes an NCIP conceptualization of “indigenous governance



structures.” The KEF’s action in response was to engage in sensemaking of their ritual traditions of the roles of elders, and formalizing an emergent understanding that furthers their own conceptualization, rather than that of external agents.

### **Sensemaking and Legitimation as Translational Modalities**

The second claim I make in Chapter 4 in relation to RQ 1 reads, “processes of dialogue and translation author hybridized indigenous texts through the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation.” I use the term “translational modalities” to describe these processes of institutionalization by Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004). Their use of *sensemaking* derives from Weick (1979; 1995) and was applied to institutionalization as “a retrospective interpretation of actions. . . triggered by surprises, puzzles, or problems” (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004, p. 641). In the understanding here, “...problems” corresponds with discursive tensions produced by contradictory texts. Sensemaking in this study was most apparent in attempts to locate neologisms in traditionally oral-tradition understandings of legal texts. Perhaps the most used neologism is the term “indigenous” itself. What is meant by “indigenous” is often unvoiced among the Kalanguya themselves, who usually revert to the exonymic, acronym “IP” as a concession to external texts such the IPRA, where these designations appear and project power. These external expectations of indigeneity, in turn, are addressed by the Kalanguya through dialogue in their attempts to render concepts implicit to themselves into explicit terms. Especially in the use of the term “elder” to denote persons with traditional authority, the Kalanguya interpretation had always been implicit and self-evident among themselves.

The second modality of the current claim is legitimation, which Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) explain in social constructionist terms, as a means of passing on socially constructed understandings of the world to a next generation as well as to the wider community.

Legitimation, in this sense, is the institutional work of constructing texts, whose durability ensures the inheritance or distribution of traditions. As understood in terms of this analysis, it is through legitimation that hybridized texts are authored; hybridized ideas and economies are “fixed” into some durable form as document or ritual, thus rendering them as legitimate to descendants or a wider community. A good example of legitimation may be seen in the KEF organic vegetable progra. In order to shift from the unsustainable, monoculture of sayote, the KEF “wrote” a new set of agroforestry practices intertextually linked to older traditions of the kaingin. Legitimation of the rituals of organic vegetable farming required not only conversations about the practice, but also a pilot farm through which the formal text of vegetable farming was “written” directly onto the forest-text.

What links the two translational modalities is intertextuality. In the case of the organizational structure of the CADT Federation, the appropriation of externally sourced text from the IPRA required the assembled elders to propose understandings derived from their oral traditions into phrases such as “council of elders,” a concept foreign Kalanguya culture. The hybrid form of the CADT Federation organizational structure (figure 5.2) contains a blend of texts drawn from Kalanguya tradition as well as from the IPRA.

The translational modalities of sensemaking and legitimation -- through a reflexive appropriation or construction of neologisms -- are thus the means through which hybridized indigenous texts are constructed and institutionalized. Translation thus is, in this way, not simply the accomplishment of commensurability, but an interactive, dialogic process through which hybridity is produced in a process of institutionalization.

### **Making Tensions Salient in Dialogue**

The third claim that applies to RQ1 involves the importance of discursive tension. The claim reads, “the authoring of hybridized indigenous texts includes the institutional work of making discursive tensions explicit in dialogue.” As described earlier, tensions produce feelings of discomfort among actors (Fairhurst, Putnam, & Banghart, 2016). While tensions can take on various forms, in order for translational modalities to be enacted in dialogue, there needs to be a felt understanding among dialogic participants of a tension between competing institutional texts. It is through attempts to resolve tensions that translation is enabled in dialogue.

This claim is clearly illustrated in two examples. During the Environment Summit discussion on the chainsaws, competing texts of indigeneity became salient and in the ensuing discussion. Sensemaking of the term “indigenous practices” to include chainsaws became evident once the normalized understanding by the DENR was challenged. While legitimation, in the construction of texts was not observed during the event, it had become apparent to the DENR officer that the challenge to their understanding needed to be resolved as she reached out to the KEF presenter after the session. In a similar example, the NCIP assumptions on the need to translate a Memorandum of Agreement into Kalanguya was challenged by one elder who declared “Don’t insult us. We speak English!” The sudden challenge of NCIP assumptions about the indigeneity of the Kalanguya was resolved more simply; the document to be signed was left in its English version/

Answering RQ1, the three claims show that translation and dialogue have modalities that attempt to give meaning and substance to intertextual neologisms once competing texts have been placed into tension. The function of discursive tension will be examined further in the next section in response the the second research question.

### **Discursive Tensions and the Authorization of Hybridized Indigenous Texts**

In this section, I will address RQ2, “How do POs negotiate discursive tensions in authorizing hybridized indigenous texts?” As the reader will recall the definition in Chapter 1, discursive tensions emerge from contradictions between texts that produce feelings of discomfort, stress, and anxiety among human actors in organizational situations (Fairhurst, Putnam, & Banghart, 2016). The translational modalities described in the previous section -- sensemaking and legitimation -- are practices through which such tensions are resolved by facilitating the authoring of hybrid indigenous texts. In the next three subsections, I will describe how these translational mechanisms “authorize” texts by referring to specific hybridized indigenous texts that the KEF has constructed in order to relieve tensions.

#### **The Role of Institutional Facilitator**

As discussed in Chapter 2, neoinstitutionalism had been critiqued as granting too much “agency”<sup>43</sup> to structure while ignoring human agency (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). In the ontology used here, agency is a phenomenon that originates in the relationship among actors (Cooper, 2005; Latour, 2005). Thus, the institutional work described here contained both human (participants) and non-human (texts) actors that constitute the dialogic event. In chapter 4, I noted how organizations represented in the dialogue -- especially the KEF -- created opportunities for an awareness of difference - as tensions -- between texts invoked in dialogue. I argued that in many of the dialogues I observed, at least one human actor created the conditions through which tensions became apparent; that is to say, the saliency of a tension needed the human/non-human relationship in order to emerge in dialogue as a result of feelings of tension. I

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<sup>43</sup> Many would, of course, object to granting agency to “structure.” In terms of the relational agency used in the ontology of this work, “structure” is equivalent to “text” as define here (see Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009, for an explication of the differences between structural and textual approaches in CCO).

have chosen to call this agential role as “institutional facilitator,” which I defined earlier as human actors who enable, either through design or opportunity, the emergence of intertextual tensions.

I illustrated that role in Chapter 4 through the objection of one KEF member to the insinuation by the DENR official that chainsaws are not an indigenous practice. The objection raised by the participant attests to the feeling of discomfort produced by the tensions between competing texts of indigeneity. But while this tension was potentially present in the dialogue, it was not apparent until the KEF forester was impelled to act on behalf of the text of indigeneity that the Kalanguya enact. While that event was opportunistic for the KEF member, the dialogue among elders attempting to define themselves (the CADT Federation meeting) was the result of design; the intention of the meeting was precisely to author the Federation into being through an awareness of the difference between their traditional text and the neologisms contained in the IPRA.

The role of institutional facilitator can be contrasted with the concept of institutional work in general, as well as with a similarly agentic role of institutional entrepreneur. Whereas institutional work is generally described in the modalities of creating, maintaining and disrupting, facilitation is intentionally dialogic and meant to place texts in tension. Attention to the three modalities of institutional work is not the intention of institutional facilitation. Rather, the need to create dialogic opportunities transcends those modalities and proposes that a hybridized version of the old institutional order is a desirable result. The construction of a hybridized indigenous text, while one possible result of the dialogic encounter, need not be the only result. But at least among the Ikalahan/Kalanguya, hybridization is intentional and strategic; the Kalanguya are fully aware that the appropriation of Western forms is meant to provide

legitimacy, just as their sensemaking is meant to be disruptive through a translation of neologisms. Thus, it is in the facilitation of dialogue, by making participant aware of difference, that institutional work through sensemaking and legitimation are activated.

### **Activating Sensemaking and Legitimation through an Awareness of Tension**

Another partial answer to RQ2 reads, “the discursive tensions experienced by the participants activates the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation in the construction of hybridized indigenous texts.” Although this was claim was implied earlier, it needs to be made explicit here. Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) introduced both modalities in their discourse theory of institutionalization. As theorized here, sensemaking and legitimation are dialogic acts; sensemaking constructs meaning, while the fixing of the results of dialogue into durable form (through writing or ritual) represents the accomplishment of legitimation. The fixing of meaning on a text, however, needs to have all the participants in dialogue.

Again here, it is through the dialogic event where an profound awareness of difference is realize, texts come into tension, and the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation are activated. Intertextuality does not easily flow into a hybridize indigenous text; the process of negotiation includes the negotiation of meaning through sensemaking, and the construction of texts through legitimation. What this claim reinforced, therefore, is the importance of the dialogic event in bringing tensions to the surface and therefore become specific objects objects that contribute to discourse.

### **Challenging Existing Texts with Hybridized Indigenous Texts**

In response again to RQ2, I made the claim “hybridized indigenous texts dialogically challenge existing institutional texts in order to generate discursive tensions.” By this is meant that although tensions are generated originally between indigenous and Westernized texts, the

resulting hybrid text inherits the status of indigenous. The new text is then in tension as well with the original texts. Although the originary texts are represented through traces in discourse, the hybrid challenges the participants as well.

This phenomenon was especially prevalent during the Environment Summit. The NCIP presented a vision where the Ikalahan/Kalanguya could legally exert authority over the Kalahan forest. As incommensurate as their visions were, both texts stood in sharp contrast. While the KEF and NCIP understandings of the IPRA showed agreement (they cited the same passages in their presentations), the DENR presentation made no concession to indigenous rights, except that they may not be charged for following traditional rituals. In other words, the DENR readings of “indigenous practices” are rendered strange through their stereotypical and superficial understanding of what constitutes “respect.”

This claim must also be contrasted with Lawrence and Suddaby’s (2006) formulation of institutional work. Again, creation, maintenance, and disruption describe macro-level processes; the parties are aware of an ongoing isomorphism, while assuming that micro-level meanings are constructed among participants. In this sense, the three modalities mentioned in the definition of institutional work are relatively macro concepts that show the *effects of agency in the dialogic event*. What the challenging of older texts with newer texts accomplishes is to show that hybridization is an ongoing dialectic in the construction of institutions.

### **Authoring Hybridized Indigenous Texts and Reconstituting the Institutional Field of Intertextual Relationships**

One of the consequences of the ongoing dialectical construction of institutions is that the institutional field is itself constantly reconfigured in order to accommodate new texts that affect the relationships of other actors. One of the consequences is, although never total, is the

translation of older texts to accommodate the innovations of the hybrid. As discussed in Chapter 2, institutional fields were originally conceptualized as groups of organizations that affect each other (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Processes of isomorphism were conceptualized to account for why firms grew more alike over time. In the conceptualization here however, the texts that form institutions are themselves actors in the field as their intertextuality and relationality are what constitutes the field.

To that effect, RQ3 asked “How does the authorization by people’s organization of hybridized institutional texts reconstitute the intertextual relations that constitute institutional fields?” In order for it to make sense, the central verb in that question, authorization, needs to be explicated in terms relationality. Up to this point, the words “authoring,” “authority,” and “authorization” had hinted at the intertextual relationships that their etymology suggests. The indigeneous PO is theorized as simultaneously authoring new hybridized indigenous texts, imbuing the new text with authority such that it can stand in place of the organization for external actors, and finally authorization, which can be understood as the process through which the new texts is legitimized among other actors.

In the following three subsections, the focus will be on authorization, or how hybridized indigenous texts gain an ability to maintain the institution over the *longue duree*. In turn, I will explain the claims (1) how an intentionality to translate transform the meanings of the relationships between texts, (2) how an “authoritative order” is negotiated in the act of authoring, and (3) how equivocation is never wholly resolved in the process of reordering textual relationships due to the tensional knots between texts in contradiction.



### **Authoring Texts and the Transformation of the Institutional Field**

In response to RQ3, I made the claim that “the authoring of texts transforms the institutional field when their intentionality is to translate the meanings of intertextually linked texts.” While intentionality is a necessary component of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), the relational ontology used in this work maintains a slightly different attitude towards the term “intentionality.” Earlier I explicated relationality as an ontological framework that emphasizes relationships among actors as the location of agency (Cooper, 2005). Authoring, is then, not simply a human activity but a collaboration between humans (authors) and non-humans (text) that produce a transformative capacity to change institutional fields. Maguire and Hardy (2010) note that fields are composed of relationships between actors, meaning systems, and formal rules. As implied in our earlier discussion, the presence of a new text influences other texts in the field. What I have not yet proposed is how these relationships not only affect other actors, but that through their quality of intertextuality, older texts show up in newer texts, which then appropriate their agency. For Kuhn (2008), this agentic quality of texts is lent to an aggregated agency we call “the firm.” A similar occurrence happens in terms of our institutions. The meanings of and between texts in discourse, needs this quality of intertextuality in order to display coherence (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004) and commensurability (Hanks, 2015) among diverse actors.

The accomplishment of intertextuality is intentional. Human actors understand that they stand in relationship with other actors, the meanings of which are dependent on their coherence with other texts. Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) describe coherence as a property of discourse where the meanings of texts are aligned, and therefore commensurable among human actors. This aspect of intertextuality is important in the shaping of the institutional fields, because

it is the property of coherence that determines which texts, in a field of texts, support institutionalization. The institutional field is, therefore, shaped by the system of meanings formed through intertextuality.

### **Negotiating the Order Among Texts**

The ordering of texts, that is to say which texts come to be preferred due to their coherence and commensurability, is not determined simply by the presence of intertextuality. Human actors affect and are affected by the texts in the institutional field. The relational networks of influence is not an accident; the actors in the field negotiate the intertextual order in efforts to determine whose meanings of a hybridized indigenous text is to become the basis for institutionalization. The claim “the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts involves the negotiation of authoritative order between competing texts” must then be taken in light of how power relations among competing texts determine which networks, and their meanings, become authoritative and constitutive of the institution.

In order to illustrate this claim, the constitution of the CADT Federation included a translation of neologisms from the IPRA. The KEF and elders understood that appropriating the language from the IPRA was a necessary step in order to gain legitimacy. The “council of elders” could have been called any number of things, but in making a direct reference to the IPRA, the law lends its authority to the Federation’s organizational texts. Of course, there is no guarantee that the NCIP and other external actors will maintain a coherence with the Kalanguya understanding of the structure. But accomplishing commensurability means that *both parties’ understandings are transformed in the process of hybridization*. The phrase “council of elders” was highly equivocal up to the point that the Kalanguya elders began to define it in their own terms. Although NCIP representatives were present, their presence was not to intervene, but to

lend the authority of their organizational texts to the newly formed understanding of what the phrase might mean. Whether or not commensurability had been accomplished was not determined at the time I left, but both the KEF board and the NCIP staff were satisfied in the fact that the phrase “council of elders” had lost some of its equivocality.

### **Equivocation and Authoritative Order**

In response to RQ3, I make one final claim, which reads “equivocation of authoritative order is never wholly resolved through the authorization of hybridized indigenous texts as these are subject to continuous negotiation in dialogue.” The intentional reduction of equivocation in the intertextual relations is difficult to accomplish wholly. That is to say, the commensurability of a translation is always contingent on a the ongoing dialogue among actors in the institutional field. What this mean is that the institutional field -- as a network of actors -- is always in the process of negotiating an authoritative order.

To a large extent, the NCIP and the KEF (as well as other POs) need each other. Both organizational texts appropriate language from the IPRA. The POs themselves are defined by the IPRA, as is the NCIP. Despite the NCIP being composed primarily of indigenous people, the fact that they are a national level agency means that they also maintain an intertextuality with the institutions of formal governance embodied in the Republic. The POs of the unified CADT understand this dualistic nature of the NCIP, and that the amount of equivocation is contingent on the intertextual relationships among other government agencies. Thus, the texts that constitute the discourses on governance, land tenure, agroforestry, and indigeneity are in a constant state of negotiation; the authoritative order of texts that represents the institutions of the Kalanguya, NCIP, and the DENR is an ongoing project.

### **Contributions to Literature and Limitations of this Study**

The study of forestry development is by its nature interdisciplinary. Development planners must necessarily consider the environment when crafting policy. Foresters know that humans and forests live in a relationship with the same environment. And communication scholars have an interest in the communicative aspects of development and the environment. As a work that claims primarily to derive from a tradition of organizational communication, I would be remiss to not also consider how this document contributes to development studies, and organizational studies of institutions.

### **Contributions to Development Studies of Community-Based Forestry Management**

The paradigm of community based forestry management is currently in its third decade and has largely been studied from a post-positivist epistemology based on rational actor models (see Chapters 1 and 2). Yet, even scholars who espouse views based on Ostrom's (2015) conceptualization of institutions as "rules and prescriptions" understand that one cannot separate rule construction and consumption from hermeneutics. In as much as rules are texts that need interpretation, Banzon-Cabanilla (2011) expressed a warning against false dichotomies such as "indigenous" vs "modern" when studying practices of agroforestry. Along similar lines, Cleaver (2002) noted how traditional systems of governance are retained with new systems put in place by Westernized policy. Generally, locals find a mix of practices and adopt them in a patchwork fashion. Institutions are a "bricolage" that mingle old and new. More recently, Babili et al. (2015) critiqued the current view of institutions as overly prescriptive, with communication primarily thought of as a means towards decentralizing of systems of governance. More importantly, they note that prior theories ignored contextual and external factors that contributed to institutional dynamics. Consequently, Babili et al. studied decentralized CBFM situations in

Tanzania and noted that a multi-logic approach that included studying institutional logics of *discourse*, appropriateness, and consequentialism could better account for successful implementations of CBFM. Importantly, “discourse” in the sense used in their study was not limited to the transmission of rules and ideas but included negotiation and deliberation by actors as they assessed new ideas within frameworks of existing institutions.

This dissertation extends this literature in two ways. First, by centering the role of communication in the process of institutionalization, the dynamics of institutional change become more accessible to the researcher. Specific actions, texts, artifacts, become “objects of discourse” whose function as “texts” may be understood by how they influence each other intertextually. Understanding how institutions “drift” (Cleaver, 2002) is also then satisfied through discourse analysis and the construction of texts. Cleaver’s “bricolage” may be accounted for in terms of dialogue and translation, through processes of sensemaking, legitimation, and intertextuality.

A second contribution in the area of CBFM extends the concept of “discourse” as used by Babili et al. (2015) by introducing dialogue and translation, as institutional work, into the analysis of institutional change. Thus, in the postcolonial conditions that CBFM is typically embedded into, NGO and PO workers will find it useful to understand how particular authoritative texts, and to build intertextuality with these texts, in the process of constructing new, hybridized, policy texts, lends legitimation to local voices essential to successful CBFM.

### **Contributions to Neo-Institutional Theory in Organization Studies**

Here I address primarily the discourse view of institutionalization advanced by Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004), Maguire and Hardy (2009; 2010), and the concept of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). This work has provided “grist for the mill” for Phillips,

Lawrence, and Hardy's (2004) discourse theory of institutionalization. Reconceptualizing the institutional field as a network of relationships is not a wholly large leap from Maguire and Hardy (2010) who view the institutional field as containing meanings. However, in stressing the relational production of meaning, it should be understood that meanings are a property of interaction among humans and non-humans that is an ongoing accomplishment. Thus, understanding institutionalization as a process of meaning formation should consider the role of institutional facilitators in creating opportunities for meaning negotiation and transformation through dialogue and translation.

The introduction, therefore of dialogue, with its profound awareness of difference among participants, is one contribution to Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy's (2004) organizational discourse theory of institutionalization. In identifying the modalities of sensemaking and legitimation, the agency of textual relations brings an understanding of the dynamic nature of institutions and their negotiated order. The introduction of hybridization contributes as well to Maguire and Hardy's (2010) theory of deinstitutionalization as a process where specific texts become deinstitutionalized once they are alienated from their original meanings. This study shows that the construction of meaning is a bi-directional flow between text and conversation (Taylor & Van Emery, 2000) and that deinstitutionalization is not simply the disappearance of particular ideas and knowledge, but rather that new institutional texts maintain intertextuality with existing authoritative texts whose originary authority continues to exert a presence.

In terms of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), which addresses the role of human agency in the creation, maintenance, and disruption of institutions, this work shows how (and consistent with Maguire & Hardy, 2009; 2010) institutional work involves the construction of texts and intertextual linkages. While the intentionality of human actors is not in dispute, the

role of textual agency also helps explain the process of how intertextuality operates. That is, certain texts bear down, lend legitimacy, and finally grant authority to a proposed institutional text. Intentional textual work, therefore, must also also consider how particular texts are authorized through dialogic and translational modalities of sensemaking, legitimation and intertextuality.

Also, the introduction of the role of institutional facilitator lends to the understanding of agency among institutional actors. The necessity of tensions, and the need to ensure their saliency, would be of interest to organizational practitioners intending to construct institutions (hopefully) for the better.

Finally, this study extends the range of possible actors in the institutional field to include authoritative texts. Maguire and Hardy (2010) hinted at this in equating institutionalization with the construction and dissemination of texts among actors in the field. This study introduces textual agency in into the mix and redefines the institutional field as a network of intertextual relationships. The expanded view of texts as inhabiting institutional fields addresses the structure/agency question that required the introduction of institutional work in the first place.

### **Contributions to Organizational Communication**

At least in terms of the CCO paradigm (and Montreal School specifically), this work extends the understanding of textual agency (Cooren, 2004; Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009), authoritative texts (Kuhn, 2008) and collective identity Koschmann (2011). Montreal School research has focused on the text/conversation dynamic in diverse ways such as in terms of organizational presence (Cooren, Brummans, & Charrieras, 2008), organizational tensions (Cooren, et al, 2011), accountancy symbols (Faure, Cooren, & Matte, 2019), interorganizational collaborations (Koschmann, 2011), to name a few. This work contributes to this literature by

centering on the purposeful production of texts and the role of intertextuality in communicative constitution. Human actors deliberately construct hybrid texts in order to establish legitimacy and make sense of what was previously implicit. Through such intertextuality, the concept of authoritative text is extended beyond accounting for the existence of firms (Kuhn, 2008) or interorganizational collaborations (Koschmann, 2011). Instead, I argue that hybridized texts can become authoritative and extend to the collective identity and agency of tribes and language groups and survive the *longue duree* of historical discourses.

In terms of postcolonial approaches to organizational communication (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2013; 2015) and communication for social change (Dutta, 2011), this work provides empirical cases of translation and dialogue conducted in decolonization of systems of knowledge and culture. By establishing the linkage of discourse and translation as co-present phenomena, this work extends our understanding of the organization of social transformation, especially in the case of organizations promoting the interests of particular subaltern groups.

### **Limitations of this Study and Recommendations for Future Studies**

Despite the rather ambitious goals of this study, research in institutionalization requires more attention to the *longue duree* than a six-month ethnography. Given that constraint, the dynamics of institutionalization as an on-going project needs a wider, longitudinal time-frame in order to understand the temporality of institutions. Worthwhile longitudinal work would include how the institutional work of the KEF progresses over time, shares authority, and engage in the construction of additional hybrid texts to account for tensions that arise from their current institutional work.

Because of space and time limitations, this study was focused on a single organization, albeit the one with the longest history and influence. Still, it will be useful to more fully gain the



perspective of other organizations within the field, especially among the other POs. Gathering data from multiple organizations would require both more time in the field and an expanded network of ethnographic researchers.

Finally, the data in this work was collected in English and Tagalog. Much of the dialogue that transpired was in Kalanguya and Ilocano, neither language being intelligible to me. Thus, much of the data about the dialogic events required accounts from informants for me to make sense of them. Gathering more data in the native dialects and hiring a translator to transcribe these into English/Tagalog would add depth to the understanding and analysis of the dialogic events being observed.

### **Coda: Sitting with Elders in Imugan**

*It is Sunday morning and I am sitting with Rogelio and Crispin in the market area underneath the barangay hall of Imugan. I am familiar enough with Imugan to understand some of the banter and gossip of their conversation, even though I do not speak Kalanguya. Their conversation is interrupted by the loud ringing of a church bell. Crispin stands first and invites me to join the community for Sunday services with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.*

*The church is small, but can still accommodate most of the adults in Imugan. I recognize many of the elders from different events, as well as many of the KEF staff attending with their families. The two pastors, a man and a woman, stand and lead the attendees in prayer. The prayers are said in the Kalanguya language. I pick up the bible in front of me. It is also written in Kalanguya. Near*

*the end of the services, the congregation sings the doxology to the tune of “Old Hundredth.”*

*The services are over and on leaving the church, I can see the stand of pine trees over the old datu’s crypt on the hillside opposite the church.*

I cannot help but wonder if the old *datu* had any idea what he had started by inviting a Christian church into the community. The presence of the church was more than another instance of colonization. The first pastor, Delbert Rice, influenced not only Imugan and the Kalanguya. He was a major force in the creation of indigenous rights not only in the Philippines but internationally. Guiding the Imugan elders in establishing the KEF was only an early step. The institutions developed in Imugan made their way isomorphically into many other places that work towards indigenous rights.

As the local story goes, Pastor Rice arrived in Imugan on the day that the old *datu* died. According to one informant, he and his family arrived on the scene and thought they had entered a ghost town. Following the sound of bamboo clappers and brass gongs, the Rice family wandered through Imugan and came upon the old *datu*’s funeral. Imugan, in those days, was accessible by a dirt road (the present concrete road was only installed in 2014) so getting to Imugan took either a long walk or a four-wheel drive vehicle.

The trip to Malico would have taken much longer than it does today. Long enough that as one story goes, getting a famous faith healer from Malico to Imugan took over a day to undertake the trip. Now, the same trip is a 15 minute ride by motorcycle. Yet if you ask the KEF, this road is a threat to their culture and lifestyle. While the Ikalahan/Kalanguya have been successful in keeping most threats at bay. They understand that this road is a compromise made between the

KEF the Department of Public Works and Highways. The two-lane road is still an environmental threat, but it is at least less so than a four-lane highway.

*This highway runs in front of Crispin's house. The traffic is light passing through Imugan Centro, so he takes the opportunity to lay tiger grass fronds on the concrete to dry them in the sunshine. Some of his chickens are wandering nearby. One chick jumps on the coffee table, but quickly jumps off. I ask Crispin if he has any advice for me. He tells me to always ask permission before going into other communities, "and don't go there alone, bring someone from here." As he tells me this I notice a long bolo on the wall behind him. Imugan may be its "capital," but this community and others inland live as they always have, and would prefer it remain that way if they can help it.*

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