



The Creation of ‘*Batang Tekno*’: A Mission Organization’s “Boarding House” Approach and The Assimilation of Iraya Mangyan Children and Their Families in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro

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Abstract: This research study looks at the mission endeavors of a mission organization called Teknotropheo Missions among the Iraya Mangyan children and families of Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro. This mission group started their work among these Mangyans in 1998 and since then has established a relationship based on the participation of the Iraya Mangyan children and families in the different programs being carried out among them by the mission organization. Various ways by which Teknotropheo Missions proved to be of help and services among these Mangyans were evident especially when the community experienced a crossfire incident in 2006 which eventually led them to resettle to another location closer to the town. Throughout the course of these events the Iraya Mangyan children and families have gained a high regard for formal education. This has resulted in new priorities for the community and the desire to make their children finish schooling. The Teknotropheo Missions has a scholarship program to assist education needs of the Iraya Mangyan children. One of its provisions is to house and feed these children at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center where training of behavior of the students—called “*batang tekno*”—are being performed by the staff members inside the institution.

This kind of set-up reflects the notion of “total institution” coined by Goffman in the 1960s and supported by the ideas of Foucault (1977) with regard to how disciplining of bodies placed within a confined setting can produce new individuals and thus transformation (reformation) of members can be achieved. The following discussion shows that changes of behavior among *batang tekno* depend on how long the student stays at the institution—whether they “stay-in” or go home after school to their own families. The assertions established on this paper are also drawn from the insights of “practice theory” (Ortner 1994) to understand the engagement by the staff, the *batang tekno*, and their parents with the changing aspects observed in the lives of the *batang tekno* and their families. Remarkable among them is how their behaviors are becoming accustomed to the modern lifestyles of their lowland counterparts in town. The data from which this study was drawn is based from the own ethnographic investigation of the researcher that was conducted through intermittent fieldwork visits in Mindoro in 2006 and 2007 using the following research methods: house survey, informal interviews, and participant observation.

Key Words: Iraya Mangyan; mission organization; total institution; assimilation; youth and children



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

On July 16, 2006, Sunday, at around 5:30 in the morning, a crossfire incident happened at Sitio Nangka, Barangay Balao in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro. A group of New People's Army soldiers had spotted an operation of the Regional Mobile Group of the Philippine National Police in the area.

After four hours, the Armed Forces of the Philippine troop air evacuated two casualties from the RMG-PNP group together with one wounded soldier. The first batch of twenty four families moved to Teknotropheo Missions Development Center at San Isidro, Barangay Poblacion (i.e. bayan). On that same night, a group of Mangyans from nearby sitios vacated their homes in search of a safer place to stay in Poblacion.

On July 17, 2006, Monday, a second batch of another twenty four families from Sitio Nangka was brought to San Rafael Parish Church and to the Office of Mangyan Affairs in the vicinity of Poblacion. This has a relative distance from the area of incidence of about 5.5 kilometers, around an hour of walking.

Five days after the incident, there were 293 individuals from the affected areas listed as housed at the four evacuation centers in Poblacion. The evacuees were advised not to go back to their houses in the span of twelve days because of the ongoing "clearing operation" of the Philippine Army and RMG-PNP groups. During this time, immediate assistance and relief distribution from government and non-government agencies alike were provided.

On July 28, 2006, Friday, twelve days after the crossfire, some families were able to go back to their own houses while the rest, particularly affected Mangyan families, had transferred and were staying on a vacant lot situated in Sitio Magnot, Barangay Balao. A certain Tagalog owned the land and had given them permission to stay, without any compensation, for up to two months.

In October 2006, after the given duration, the Mangyans were able to settle in another unoccupied lot within the same sitio. This time, another Tagalog landowner asked them to purchase the land for Php 120,000, an amount they need to pay in full by May 2007.

The amount was paid by May 2007 with the assistance of Teknotropheo Missions. The mission organization shouldered 75 percent of the entire amount.

Along with the said event was a reflection that these Iraya Mangyans would not be able to go back in Sitio Nangka for fear of loss of their rice fields and riddance of settling on the land. However, the resettlement, made through the aid of Teknotropheo Missions, turned their fear into delight as it paved the way for their schooling children to reach the town easily.

This ethnographic research was couched from my own field observations in the place where I conducted my research in the municipality of Abra de Ilog, in the province of Occidental Mindoro. Curiosity prompted me to visit, a simple wish to see the place and the Mangyans, as well as to learn how mission work is being carried out by the organization known as Teknotropheo Missions.

I was listening to a Christian radio station then when I heard about their mission activities featured in the segment "*Mabati ang Mabuti*" program in 2005. I became interested with their initiatives with the Mangyans and eventually came into contact with them to consider my visit as an opportunity for exploration and gain a probable topic for a graduate research paper.

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Through my prior communication with the staff members, I had received warning against going on with my trip. I might face certain dangers in their area at Poblacion. I learned then that there was a red alert situation raised in their place due to political unrest in a nearby Mangyan community where they are pursuing mission work, the very specific place I thought I could live in.

In the month of August 2006, I decided to visit the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center located in Poblacion at the town proper or *bayan* of Abra de Ilog. During the boat ride and accompanied by staff members of Teknotropheo Missions, I learned that my visit was only a month after the crossfire event.

It was a Tuesday evening when I arrived at their mission center. Upon entry to Teknotropheo Missions Development Center I saw a group of young people—men and ladies alike having their Bible study and sharing time accompanied by the staff at the so-called multi-purpose room or MPR.

Dinner followed at the dining hall where we waited for everyone to come together to begin praying for the food led by either the Teknotropheo worker or a representative from the young people who I discovered were Iraya Mangyans. I noticed that they did the household chores before and after the supper meal. Young ladies start piling up plates while bringing these to the dishwashing area whereas young men do the mopping of floor tiles. When finished, the young men leave to go to their quarters just a few steps away from the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center.

At this time, everybody is expected to study school lessons and work on their school assignments or school projects. A staff member helps them understand their homework, enough to find and provide correct answers to the questions they found hard to figure out. The night ends with chatter and giggles overheard through the wall between the rooms, growing fainter as everyone fell asleep.

As I observed these minute details, my interest was stirred up with the thought of exploring how these young people lived at the mission center. It was clear how they were placed “in the same boat,” that they had to do things together and behave in an “orderly” manner.

I learned during my initial visit that these Iraya Mangyan youth and children were called *batang tekno*. They were residents or the “stay-in” *batang tekno* and they were the scholars of Teknotropheo Missions education program. Their privileges included full tuition responsibilities, school uniforms, food, and shelter. Aside from these, the mission organization helped their parents by providing livelihood and exposing them to Christian teachings.

The Teknotropheo Missions Development Center where these children were staying can be likened to a boarding school, a residential private area where “students learn, live, exercise and play together in a communal setting under adult supervision” (Kennedy, n.d.). The *batang tekno* receives formal education under the government school system and they experience living the boarding school life which follows a highly structured day in which the schedule of classes, study time, meal time, recreation period and other activities are predetermined for them, with a recognized adult overseer. This removes them from the supervision of their own families and parents who live in their respective communities or *sitios*. I wondered then how the parents [can] exercise or perform their duties and responsibilities as parents and [can] spend time with their children while these live away from their respective homes or families.

To the Iraya Mangyans in this study, Teknotropheo Missions acts as a family where the relationships built with the staff members are as with an older member of the family like calling them as “*ate*” (older sister) and “*kuya*” (older brother).

A family serves as the socializing agent of every individual. Among its members emotional and nurturing spirit are desired; where mutual love and security in the family are provided. This is also where

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values are initially formed. Aside from this, economic support is valued, with each member sharing and contributing oneself as a productive member to the family by means of helping in housekeeping chores and/or by bringing in financial assistance.

A *batang tekno* is a child benefiting from the scholarship privileges of the education program of Teknotropheo Missions. As a scholar, he or she has an opportunity to be housed in town at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center where the child is expected to abide by the rules as supervised by the staff members of the mission organization. Childhood for the stay-in *batang tekno* is thus taking on a new pattern from that of children staying in their sitio where a kind of some alterations in the habits and behavior may take place.

As Iraya Mangyan families place their children inside a “total institution” such as the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center, this “surrender” manifests a control or training of behavior where it “makes” individuals by the ability of the mission organization to effect change of behavior through the *Batang Tekno* program. After all, the children are being wholly enveloped in the power of the institution through their participation in the mission endeavors of Teknotropheo Missions.

The Iraya Mangyan families themselves have dreamed of education for their children, believing that this can lift them out of poverty through having high-paying jobs for their children who are privileged to be scholars of Teknotropheo Missions’ education program. With farming as their primary source of income, they are incapable of providing for the schooling needs of their kids. Their experience of being caught in the crossfire and being removed from their land made them more susceptible to pressing concerns like loss of livelihood and shelter as well as the fears for their schooling children.

The mission organization provides means for the *batang tekno* and their families to gain access to what they need and desire in life (e.g. land, education, etc.) in order for the latter to confront existing challenges such as economic dependence for everyday living.

This study attempts to address the following broad research questions and delves into the power of an institution, the Teknotropheo Missions, wielded over a small community in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro. What are the concrete mechanisms that have enabled this mission organization to succeed in its assimilation agenda among Iraya Mangyans? What is the source of the institution’s power? Why or how is this power sustained?

1.2 Review of Related Literature

1.2.1 Mission, “Development”, and The Iraya Mangyans

The Iraya Mangyans are regarded as the “most acculturated group” among the Mangyans, according to Helbling and Schult (2004) and they have faced different challenges with regard to their traditional way of living through the encounters with and the exposure to foreign colonizers and foreign and local missionaries who included in their strategies “helping” the Mangyans “develop.” Different areas in their lives were influenced by external initiatives, especially in the areas of formal education and religion.

As early as the 1570s, the Mangyans of Mindoro encountered the Hispanization process brought about by the presence of the Spaniards in the country. In fact, written records present the different monastic orders took charge in sending spiritual heads or superiors in the presence of Spanish friars and secular priests in the “Christianization” of the entire Philippine archipelago (Schult, 1991; See also Helbling and Schult, 2004; Lopez, 1975; Lopez, 1976; Gibson, 1986). In 1572, the Augustinian missionaries pioneered the evangelization work in Mindoro (Schult, 1991; Lopez, 1975; Lopez, 1976; Helbling and Schult, 2004). They were followed by the Franciscans in 1578. The main goal indeed was to “Christianize the islamized and pagan population” in

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Mindoro (Schult, 1991). However it was discovered that the seculars put great interest on the “materialistic” side, that is, in preserving Mangyan territories, instead of religious evangelization (Lopez, 1976).

The Jesuit missionaries succeeded where the Franciscans failed. The Mangyans were converted and baptized as Christians in mid-16th century (Schult, 1991; Lopez, 1975; Javier, 1987). It was considered successful after their zeal to penetrate the Mangyan area of forests and hills in search for them and to persuade them to Christian instructions and sacrament of baptism (Javier, 1987). The Jesuits established *reducciones* as their way of expediting the conversion of the Mangyans in 1636. Schult (1991) described it as “settlements where Mangyans from the inaccessible forests and hills were induced to settle down and be baptized as Christians.” This included the activities and instruction prepared both for the adults and children populace (Javier, 1987).

This resulted in the “subsequent incorporation of many Mangyans... [but] they also caused the other Mangyans to retreat into the interior. Those who remained in the *reducciones* and embraced the new faith have become Hispanized lowlanders. But those who refused and withdrew into the mountains remained forest peoples and, therefore, technologically less advanced” (Javier, 1987). This gave rise to the separation of the Tagalog lowland people and the Mangyan upland as what Lopez revealed in her studies as the “Mangyan-Christian lowland dichotomy” (Lopez, 1975, 1976). It clearly showed that even in this kind of zealous missionary efforts, the Mangyans still held to strong beliefs in their ancestors and could not totally abandon them. The missionaries may not have had “enough” knowledge as to how indigenous peoples considered that religious performances involved in their ancestral beliefs and their respect to spirit world play an important role in their economic and their social life (see Gowing and Scott, 1971). This same plight appears among their indigenous people group counterpart in the north, the Ifugao, that amidst the tremendous missionary efforts in the Ifugao land, resistance was what the missionaries received, or sometimes a minimal and temporary turn from their tradition and tribal religion (Lambrecht in Gowing and Scott, 1971).

On the Catholic mission side, the administration of the Society of the Divine Word was appointed to restore the island’s evangelization. The missionaries personally conducted barrio visits to gain the trust of and establish rapport with the Mangyans when they started its religious work in Mindoro in 1936. They employed the “Cartilla Method” that included instruction on reading, writing, arithmetic and religion, or the so-called “4Rs.” It was used to encouraged the Mangyans to be the own future leaders of their respective settlements. The Mangyans were noted to have been baptized through these efforts shown by the missionaries. However, many of them once again pursued their own traditional religious beliefs (Javier, 1987).

The Catholic religious leaders were challenged by this struggle they found in converting the Mangyans. Thus the SVD group turned to the so-called three missionary efforts namely: “catechumenate method,” “great convention method,” and “guest house method” (Javier, 1987; also in Padilla, 1991). The catechumenate method was established to deal with their difficulty in reaching the Mangyans further upland. It somehow lightened the work of the missionaries to be sent to the mountains since lay catechists were called to do the task of occasionally visiting the Mangyans. Catechism classes were carried out where there were school buildings; and to encourage the Mangyans’ attendance, they give medals and crucifixes (Javier, 1987).

The “great convention method” was one way of mobilizing the people to introduce to them Christianity. This was performed by the SVD missionaries who organized the Mangyans to be present at conventions organized in different strategic venues. After the convention the Mangyans received relief goods as their honorarium of coming to the event. They also were given food throughout the convention period (Javier, 1987; also in Padilla, 1991).

The “guest house method” was the last approach used by the Catholic missionaries to evangelize the Mangyans. Guest houses were established within the vicinity of the convent in town. It is open to the Mangyans who wanted to spend the night whenever they visit the town or *bayan*. In this way, the Catholic priests hoped to

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help the Mangyans establish relationships with them and even the other lowlanders (Javier, 1987; Padilla, 1991).

As an effect of the approach developed by these missionaries, many of the people came to know more about the Christian doctrine and were eventually baptized (Javier, 1987). The missionaries hoped that with these methods they would be able to help the Mangyans overcome extreme shyness and fears especially in relating with them.

The Catholic missionary work with the Mangyans later turned to a different and new strategy with the work of Fr. Antoon Postma. He concentrated his missionary endeavor among the Hanunoo Mangyan group and was determined to gain understanding of the people's culture and its expressions and one of its manifestations is his learning of the Hanunoo language, script and the song-poem *ambahan* (Javier, 1987; Lopez, 2002). He did not start his work on a ready proclamation of the Christian doctrine yet he gained participation from them. Initially, he tried to encourage the parents to send their children to school and get a formal education. According to Postma, it was through education that the challenge to "develop" and the integration of the Mangyans in the Christian faith would follow (Lopez, 2002). As a result, "the Mangyans appear to have better survived the onslaughts of lowland migrants" (Lopez, 2002) whereas throughout the colonial Spanish and American regimes, the Mangyans experienced subtle manipulation and/or exploitation of the lowland non-Mangyan group, accompanied by the grabbing of lands from the hands of the former.

However, Postma (1989) observed that what the older Mangyans' practices and teachings like reciting the traditional song-poem *ambahan* were becoming less common. Postma was aware that education, alongside the "modern life" brought by various non-Mangyan settlers in Mindoro, were presenting "attractions" that were catching the interest and attention of the Mangyans. Education at school, watching television, and listening to jukebox-radio were more interesting to them. These were appearing to be of "superior value" to the Mangyans while former ways were getting abandoned. To Postma, whatever "Mangyan did in the past... was being done because it was useful for him/her and of practical value" (Postma, 1989).

On the other hand, a team of Protestant missionaries also became eager to reach the different tribes of Mindoro to proclaim the "Good News." The 1950s saw an increase in the number of these evangelical workers (Lopez, 1975, 1976). The first to work among the Mangyans were the New Tribes Mission which later yielded to the Overseas Missionary Fellowship or the formerly China Inland Mission (Javier, 1987; Lopez, 2002; see also Davis, 1998). Officially, the Overseas Missionary Fellowship began its work in April 1952 among the Iraya Mangyans in the Oriental part of Mindoro (Lopez, 2002).

These evangelical missionaries painstakingly learned the language of the Mangyans and did gospel recordings of the different Mangyan dialects as their way of reaching out to them at the onset (Lopez, 1975; Davis, 1998). Through these efforts, a thorough knowledge of the dialects and culture of the Iraya, Buhid, and other Mangyan groups was obtained (Lopez, 1975; Javier, 1987).

The Overseas Missionary Fellowship has also made use of the "clean-sweep-method" which obliged the converts to turn explicitly from their customs and traditions that are contrary to Christian teachings (Javier, 1987; Padilla, 1991). It appeared in the written studies that the OMF evangelicals had a major achievement with regard to their evangelization of the Mangyans and that was in bringing them together in a conference or the "intertribal fellowship" of believers called the *Samahang Pantribong Iglesiyang Ebanghelika ng mga Mangyan* (Lopez, 2002; Javier, 1987). The first intertribal fellowship of believers was held in 1959 where four of the five Mangyan men who led the meetings were Iraya Mangyan (Davis, 1998).

To further equip the Mangyan leaders, the OMF missionaries also worked on building a Mangyan Bible School. It was intended to train or equip young men who might become future leaders, elders, deacons, and evangelists in their area (Lopez, 2002; Javier, 1987; Davis, 1998).

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Along with this and in response to the socioeconomic problems the Mangyans are experiencing from the lowland migrants, the evangelical workers also organized a program called *Programa sa Pagpapaunlad ng mga Mangyan* or PPM (Lopez, 2002; Javier, 1987). Established in 1976, the integrated development program aimed to improve the following areas to help them ease the daily struggles in the life of a Mangyan. These are: adult education, health, law, trade, agriculture and scholarship (Lopez, 2002; Javier, 1987). Hence, it encouraged active participation of members between and among the different Mangyan groups.

Davis (1998) noted in her study that indeed this was the time that the Mangyans “feel and act like first class citizens” for they were able to get their lands registered and they were also learning to mingle with the non-Mangyan people (136). Yet, just like the other missionary activities, the OMF missionaries faced the “dilemma” of the return of the Mangyans to the spirit or ancestral worship (1998, 143).

Javier (1987) further gave a summary of the strategies employed in the mission work. The missionaries wanted to express the Christian message and the teachings of the Church through the following: involvement with economic development, social justice, and education; conscientization of the people regarding their human dignity and the rights that flow from it, their potentials and capabilities, and participation in their development and liberation process (81).

Looking back in the history of the missionary activities in the Philippines, it seems that the attitudes of the missionaries toward the so-called “development work” is to merely help them because the people needs help. Extension of services, for example in providing health facilities, agricultural methods and education to name some, was delivered because of a “felt need” or a primary need of a particular group of people. It nevertheless succeeded in the “indoctrination” as an instrument or tool for the people to come to Christian belief or doctrine (de la Costa in Achutegui, 1970). Nonetheless the common intention of the missionaries was to “convert” and “indoctrinate” people despite having used different approach or strategies in “winning” them.

With the pattern of oppression and exploitation encountered from the hands of colonizers and of lowland peoples as experienced by the Mangyans of Mindoro, a “need” for a change of self and society in society is being delivered by missionaries who engage in mission and development endeavors. This can be derived from a structural and historical approach where the individual plays a passive role and the “structure” which emerges from the perspectives of the religious institutions becomes dominant and takes an active part. Indeed, a variation of a Marxist trend which thus suggests that religion, [however] together with culture, “are susceptible to the manipulation and control.... They are and can be used as instruments of oppression” (Cariño, 1988). It actually implies that, on the part of these religious workers, an unconscious or latent knowledge is appearing that they, themselves, are exercising “colonization” among people they would like to help and deliver from any oppression. The missionaries nevertheless realized that with their own religious work, they are pleased especially when they see people observe and conform to what are being told for them to do and a change among them is noticed.

This study looks more closely at the evangelical mission work of Teknotropheo Missions in pursuance of their organization name *teknotropheo*, a Greek word which means to “rear up the young” or “to bring up the child” to bring their efforts among the Iraya Mangyan youth in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro... or in their own words “to bring up our nation’s poorest children to total development” (Teknotropheo brochure). Their strategy for their mission work mainly concerns the scholarship and boarding of Iraya Mangyan youth and children which can be called the “scholarship method.”

1.2.2 The Iraya Mangyans and the “Total Institution”

As Iraya Mangyan families place their children inside a “total institution” such as the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center, this “surrender” manifests a control or training of behavior where it “makes” individuals by the ability of the mission organization to effect change of behavior through the *Batang Tekno*

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program. After all, the children are being wholly enveloped in the power of the institution through their participation in the mission endeavors of Teknotropheo Missions.

This kind of set-up reflects the notion of “total institution” coined by Goffman in the 1960s and supported by the ideas of Foucault (1977) with regard to how disciplining of bodies placed within a confined setting can produce new individuals and thus transformation (reformation) of members can be achieved.

Goffman suggests how total institutions capture both the time and interest of the individuals. Through the regimented routine and disciplining of the body, a transformation of the *batang tekno* can happen when placed inside a total institution. Foucault (1977) discussed that the schedule of activities, rules, and guidelines (“norms”), and other forms of training of behavior are part of disciplining an individual—and discipline is considered as technology of power.

The discussion further shows that changes of behavior among *batang tekno* depend on how long the student stays at the institution—whether they “stay-in” or go home after school to their families. The assertions established on this paper are also drawn from the insights of “practice theory” (Ortner, 1994) to understand the engagement by the staff, the *batang tekno*, and their parents with the changing aspects observed in the lives of the *batang tekno* and their families. Remarkable among them is how their behaviors are becoming accustomed to the modern lifestyles of their lowland counterparts in town.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In order to understand how the Iraya Mangyan families are being transformed and how they are transforming themselves through their participation in the *Batang Tekno* program and becoming assimilated in the mainstream society, this present ethnography posed the following research objectives:

- 1) To present and discuss the mission endeavors of Teknotropheo Missions, particularly the *Batang Tekno* (education/scholarship) program, as the concrete mechanisms that have enabled the mission organization to succeed in its assimilation agenda among the *batang tekno* and their families;
- 2) To examine how the engagement of Teknotropheo workers among the *batang tekno* and their families influenced the participation of the latter, as the basis of the institution’s power; and,
- 3) To examine how the *Batang Tekno* program of Teknotropheo Missions results in a transformation of values of the *batang tekno* and their families along with their assimilation to lowland or mainstream culture, demonstrate the power of the mission organization to sustain its mission endeavors among them.

2. RESEARCH METHODS AND THE FIELDWORK PROCESS

My field visits to Mindoro started in August 2006. The initial trip was very brief, less than a week, because at this time I was only at the stage of discovering a probable research topic in the area. I was actually warned during this moment to take precautionary measures because of a red alert situation raised within the nearby area in Abra de Ilog. It was brought about by the crossfire event between the military and the New People’s Army groups. I intended to see a Mangyan community in the province but the Teknotropheo staff advised me that it was not feasible at that time. That is why throughout my brief stay, I lived with the *batang tekno* at the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center located in Poblacion area of Abra de Ilog. There I eventually established a measure of rapport with them, good enough to continue with my succeeding visits to probe further into my study. During this time, I had expressed my intention to the Teknotropheo Missions director and staff to conduct future fieldwork among the *batang tekno* and their families. Establishing positive relationship with them and gaining access to my key persons in the field were then achieved on this pilot visit.

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In my second trip in January 2007, I stayed at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center for almost two weeks. During this time, I was able to secure a formal arrangement with Teknotropheo Missions regarding my interest to conduct a study among them and their mission endeavors with the *batang tekno* plus their families. Aside from that, I was also able to meet with the local authorities in the municipal office where I was privileged to get official permission from them. I told them that I was a graduate student from the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. Through this, I specified to them that my presence was for research about the *batang tekno* and their families and their relationship with Teknotropheo Missions in the province, as the main advocacy of the mission organization. I had to state also to the local authorities that I was staying at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. In this way, I was able to establish with them my security while I live in their locale throughout the research stint. Because of the existing insurgent situation of the Mangyans, my presence could arouse suspicion among the military personnel routing in the municipality and near to the area of the Iraya Mangyan settlements during field visits.

I was privileged to see the Iraya Mangyan community at Sitio Magnot during this time in which Teknotropheo was pursuing its missionary efforts. I was able to get a glimpse of the typical community setting and was able to speak with some informants. Throughout my stay I was able to attend and participate in some of the activities conducted inside the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center together with the *batang tekno*. I joined them during Bible studies, both their morning and evening devotions. I also participated in their housekeeping. I also spent time with them during their tutorial sessions or their study period. I also experienced attending church services at the community area where their families were also there attending.

My background as an evangelical Christian helped me feel at ease with the activities of the mission organization like attending church services and doing Bible study among the *batang tekno* and interacting with their parents during my participant-observation period. I have had experiences of teaching youth and kids about stories in the Bible since I taught Sunday School classes at church and have had exposure dealing with the parents too.

The parents of the *batang tekno* in their community knew of my presence as a student doing studies for a graduate research paper. Hence, they recognized my need to participate and to gather substantial amount of data to be included in the study. Sometimes, they would tell me how they were used to being visited by various students and researchers from different schools and organizations from Manila who go to their place and conduct research about them. They somehow expressed disappointment that they themselves did not know where the study concerning them was being used. This aroused their suspicions and led them to be more careful in dealing with people.

My prior contact with Teknotropheo Missions was what helped me gain trust of these parents as they already knew me also as a visitor of the mission organization. Thus, my presence in Sitio Magnot, as I joined them in relevant activities during the day, was not surprising to them and did not cause them to be suspicious and apprehensive. This is also indicative of the very close relationship between the community and the mission organization.

Although I was somehow related to the Director of the mission organization as a *kababayan* (in Pangasinan) and as a distant relative of the family (as a sister of a cousin-in-law), both of us were aware that I was there merely to conduct a study. The relationship I had established with them was for the purpose of understanding their set-up of activities at the institution with the *batang tekno* and to get a glimpse of the Iraya Mangyan (their parents) life in the community setting for comparative purposes. In return, it was necessary for me to furnish them a copy of the study concerning the results of my research about their engagement with the *batang tekno* and their families.

My arrangement with Teknotropheo Missions thus was very clear that I would stay in Mindoro and reside in the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center in Abra de Ilog because they feared for me if they

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allowed me stay in the Mangyan settlements during the fieldwork. A duplicate copy of my letter of intention of conducting my study among the *batang tekno* and their families in Abra de Ilog given to the local government unit was also given to Teknotropheo Missions for record and official purposes. I was then received as a visitor and was privileged to stay there during my research stint. Along with this, I was allowed to use their facilities like the kitchen, laundry area, a guest room, bathroom, and the like. However, I gave a contribution for my food; in case I would not be able to provide for my own food resource, I would have to join them in their meal expenses. The staff would compute my food costs and I would have to pay these out.

My last and third visit was in November and December 2007. This was a month-long period of fieldwork. I was able to employ at this time the techniques used for ethnographic study (both quantitative and qualitative) like house surveys, informal interviews, and further participant observation. I was also able to have more conversation time with the *batang tekno*. Through this I was able to recount the stories they shared to me which serve as essential data. These revealed significant themes along the way as I processed notes obtained during fieldwork.

It was intended at the onset that I conduct focus group discussions with the youth, both the ladies and the gentlemen alike. However, our schedules did not match. As an outsider, I had to ask permission from the staff whenever I set a formal interview or group discussions with them. Usually the schedule of a *batang tekno* was filled during weekdays and sometimes it would be their time to go home on the weekends. Thus, only a small number of members in the group could come. Nevertheless, I was able to meet with them separately in two different occasions, one for the boys and the other with the girls, as a possible way of conversing with them in groups. I was able to gather altogether sixteen (16) *batang tekno* for this activity. There were equal number of eight (8) *batang tekno* for both groups and all were stay-in students.

As my way of spending “quality time” with them, I actually asked these children to bring me to places where we could have a leisure time, like having a picnic. This was scheduled on weekends when they did not have classes and had lighter schedules at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. I was able to ask consent from the staff and I negotiated with them in advance who would be the “scheduled” *batang tekno*, which meant they would forego coming home on a particular weekend. I was also the one who paid for the food of these *batang tekno* since the engagement was for the purpose of obtaining my own data for this study and thus, it is not dealing with the concerns of Teknotropheo Missions.

My informal conversations with the *batang tekno* thus happened during this “rest and recreation” time. I did not use any questionnaires in conversing with them for us to avoid being uneasy with each other as we went through the casual manner of conversation. The light talk we had centered on their everyday activities at the mission center, their memories and life of staying with their families before they become *batang tekno*. Through this I was able to gain their life stories that helped depict their activities in their respective communities or *sitios*.

I had to supplement this data with my direct observation with the kids in the community during the time I conducted my house survey. It allowed me to see the kids’ activities in the community milieu plus what their parents also did. Among the kids who are not studying yet, I most regularly conversed with eight (8) small children everytime I visited Sitio Magnot. At the community, I sometimes engaged with the *uwian* scholars of Teknotropheo Missions and most of them were girls who found time to help their parents after attending school at the end of the day. I spoke to around eleven (11) of them.

I was able to converse with the parents also during this time and eventually got to know them and their dreams and aspirations for their children and family. Although I was dialoguing with most of the parents during the time I conducted the house survey, most of the substantial data noted in the study were from fourteen (14) parents of the *batang tekno*. Most of these parents had two to three children studying as scholars

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of the Teknotropheo Missions. I also obtained testimonies from five (5) parents in the community who were not participating from the *Batang Tekno* program.

During the daytime when my *batang tekno* informants are in school I was in their *sitio* doing further observation. Thus I was able to perform other things and to gather extra data which concerned them even while I was outside Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. Sometimes my visit to the community turned into impromptu group conversations with the parents. The stories were noted as well as they revealed details important to this study.

I did not encounter any language problem in conversing with them since we primarily used Tagalog. It was also an advantage for me that they were pleased to teach me some Iraya words or phrases. At present, the *batang tekno* and their families seldom speak their own native language. In concurrence with what the literatures revealed, these Iraya Mangyan were indeed bilingual speakers among the Mangyan groups of Mindoro that could speak both in Tagalog and in the Iraya dialect (Tweddell, 1958).

The limitations of my fieldwork primarily rest on my limited or restricted exposure among the parents of the *batang tekno* in their own community or settlements. My entry and stay in Abra de Ilog (a total of one and a half months) were facilitated by the Teknotropheo Missions and thus I did not have any opportunity to be with the parents staying longer in their community but to visit them only during the day. My visit to the community was sometimes accompanied by downpour of rains; during my last phase of fieldwork visit in 2007, we were besieged by three consecutive typhoons namely "Lando," "Mina," and "Nonoy."

Sometimes throughout the day my visit to the community was really very short. Furthermore, I was only able to visit the parents of *batang tekno* who are only located at Sitio Magnot. Other Mangyan communities in Abra de Ilog who were also participating at the *Batang Tekno* program were not covered in the study. There were noted nine (9) students who are *batang tekno* not settling within the community of Sitio Magnot.

Along with this I made use of photo sketches and maps for this present ethnography. I took photographs of my informants in addition to the significant activities they engaged in which help me validate data and provide evidence of materials. Secondary data were also used to further supplement the data which I was unable to acquire during the fieldwork period and had provided me a baseline for theoretical and conceptual concerns employed for this research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The succeeding section includes the findings and observations of my study that resulted from my own field visits in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro.

3.1 Mission endeavors of Teknotropheo Missions

This part further introduces to the reader the mission organization named Teknotropheo Missions by presenting herein its history profile, mission endeavors, and pursuance of its programs particularly for young people. The following presentation depicts how Goffman (1959) described how an individual (or group of individuals), in this case the Teknotropheo Missions, makes an effort to control (influence) the conduct of the subjects, i.e., the Iraya Mangyan children and families, via the definition of their situation. The way that Teknotropheo Missions deploys their various programs, in particular the *Batang Tekno* program (a scholarship program for youth and children), leads the families of the *batang tekno* to act in accordance with the expectations of the mission organization.

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Teknotropheo Missions was born as a non-profit organization in April 1997, composed of volunteer workers—medical doctors, nurses, teachers, and pastors—with the assistance of generous sponsors from different Christian churches “reaching out to the nation’s poorest children.” This is deemed to be the heart of the mission organization and where it pursues the organization name *teknotropheo*. The vision-mission of Teknotropheo Missions is “to bring up our nation’s poorest children to total development.”

Teknotropheo Missions as an organization focuses on the “poorest children and youth of tribal and rural areas” in the country (Teknotropheo brochure). In order to provide “total development,” a holistic or broad approach is employed. By this they mean to involve the participation of the parents and the community at large “to walk hand in hand with them” in making their children the “hope of the nation” following, as they state, the legendary cliché of the late national hero Jose Rizal that “*Ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan*” or “The youth is the hope of the nation.”

Total development to the Teknotropheo Missions encompasses the development of all the aspects of a child. This represents one’s physical, social, intellectual and the spiritual aspect of a person (see also IYF, 1999).

Their mission for the “nation’s poorest children” gave way to what they describe as H.O.P.E. ministry programs: H-ealth care programs like medical missions, health and hygiene trainings and medical assistance; O-ut of school youth or the education program which offers scholarship to children from primary grade up to the tertiary level and by handling various trainings and exposures for self-development (educational trips); P-rogressive livelihood program where teaching skills and providing means or source of livelihood are given importance; and lastly, E-vangelism and discipleship programs which introduce God’s Word and where Teknotropheo aims to help in developing people’s faith in God and becoming able to share this with others as well.

Based on the above-mentioned programs of the mission organization, specific mechanisms were employed in their effort to help the Iraya Mangyans to attain total development. In March 1998, Teknotropheo Missions started its second mission which is “the development of Mangyan tribal children in the island of Occidental Mindoro” (Teknotropheo brochure). Initial endeavors included conducting evangelistic medical missions, film showings, and feeding programs. Within a one-month period of carrying out these activities, Teknotropheo Missions decided to focus only on a Mangyan community, extending to them the H.O.P.E. banner program. Since Teknotropheo Missions has engaged into various programs among the Iraya Mangyans for eleven years now in Abra de Ilog, the most recognized program of the mission organization is the program rendered particularly among the education needs of the youth and children—the *Batang Tekno* scholarship program.

The mission organization prioritized education as the “key” to the *batang tekno* and their families’ total development. To Teknotropheo, “Education is of major importance to help them be developed in all areas of life... and we will provide scholarship for them. Illiteracy rate is almost 100 percent.” Mangyans in general experience discrimination and abuse from the lowlanders throughout their history, linked to ignorance (of the law) due to lack of education, training and/or easy access to school areas. Being cheated in economic transactions, sales, exchange of goods, harvested crops and worse land grabbing were common (David-Perez, 1976; Javalera-Bongco, 1981). Education was indeed the way out (see also Bawagan, 2004, 2006).

With more than a decade of implementing various mission programs to the Iraya Mangyan children and families, The Mangyan Youth Development Mission became the pilot mission of Teknotropheo Missions in October 2001. It provides scholarships to the *batang tekno* under their education program. The said program not only trains the children but also gives instructions to their parents.



3.2 Engagement of Teknotropheo workers to the Iraya Mangyan

During the fieldwork period, the Teknotropheo Missions had three (3) female staff members. All of them were non-Mangyans and are college graduates. Two of these ladies were from Pangasinan province; one of them graduated from a Bible school located in Pangasinan while the other female worker was from Manila. The major functions or roles of these staffs are composed of the following: Trainer for Mangyan kids and parents, Guardian, Health Care Provider, and Tutor. As a trainer, these staff train and tutor both the children and the parents inside the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center in a holistic manner—by this, they mean it to meet the “physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of a person.” For the parents, the staff trains them in hygiene practices, cooking, laundry, and in the disciplining of their kids.

For the kids, the Teknotropheo female workers act as a counselor to the children and become like parents to the stay-in *batang tekno* who are small boys and girls. “I am always acting like a “mom” to the Tekno kids. I discipline them, give them advice, and remind them of Tekno rules and regulations. I am 24 hours on call because we live with them. In spite of this, I feel fulfillment at the end of the day,” shared one of the workers.

As health care providers, the staff members see to it that Mangyan kids are in good health. They give medicine and vitamins to the sick; they also provide medicines for the parents who go to Teknotropheo Center to ask for medicines. At times when these are not available from their supplies, the workers accompany them to buy medicines to drugstores.

During the review lessons of the kids, the staff members serve as their primary tutor and help them assess their academic improvements or their class standing. They assist the *batang tekno* in all their subjects especially in English and Reading which they find most difficult (see Figure 1). In their own assessment, “A few of them can speak in English with our foreign visitors now. They always practice conversational English.”



Fig. 1. Teknotropheo worker helping the *batang tekno* during their Reading class

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While having these roles to play among the *batang tekno*, the female workers are called elder sister (“*ate*”). Even the parents of the kids address them as such even if they are older to the Teknotropheo workers. Their conversation is also accompanied by saying “*po*” or “*opo*” to them as a sign of respect. This also indicates a subtle but definite power relationship between the *batang tekno* and their families and Teknotropheo Missions: a sense of authority brought by their influence among these Iraya Mangyans since they have worked with them for several years.

The Teknotropheo Missions has a male worker as well and is usually a pastor (a Bible school graduate). The male worker almost has the same role of what the female workers perform at Teknotropheo; however, his primary concern male students. He is called as “*kuya*” or an elder brother and often they call him as “pastor.” For the *batang tekno*, they treat and recognize him more as an older friend or “*barkada*” who can get along with their own stories and problems, and even in jokes, but when reprimand is needed among them, the “*kuya*” figure comes in who exercises authority or influence to the group. The pastor serves as the trainer, guardian, and tutor for the *batang tekno* boys. But he also makes the parents participate in mission and church activities. He does more work in the “field” or among the Mangyan families in the community whereas the female worker stay inside the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center.

As non-Mangyans, the workers have a different set of value system or beliefs and practices that are non-recognizable (uncommon) among these Mangyans to whom they bring their missionary endeavors. As the staff members have evangelical Christian faith or belief, or an educational background, or a modernized way of living, they also make ways to associate these particular views or thoughts and desires to the *batang tekno* by acting upon their necessary roles and functions as workers of Teknotropheo Missions in order to bring up the children in the so-called total development. They indeed can be located as suppliers of new knowledge.

3.3 The “*Batang Tekno*” Program of Teknotropheo Missions

The Iraya Mangyan children receiving benefits of being a scholar of the education program of Teknotropheo Missions are the “*batang tekno*.” The procedures of becoming a “*batang tekno*” are discussed here. The set-up of the scholars at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center recalls the concept of a total institution discussed earlier characterizes by a “patterned way of life, governed by structural activities conducted in the same place under an explicit formal rulings of (the) same, single authority” (Goffman, 1961).

A child becomes a *batang tekno* after parents are interviewed by any of the staff (and usually by the founder-director herself) and pass the screening or the selection stage. During this interview parents are asked what their dreams are and what their plans are in their lives, for their families, and for their children. The children in the same way are asked similar questions. This usually takes place either in their *sitios* or at the Mangyan settlements when Teknotropheo is conducting its mission field visits which generally fall during the summer months (March to May) and just before a school year starts in June.

Attending summer youth camps is also one way a child becomes a scholar. A child will get to know about Teknotropheo Missions and will eventually become interested about the mission. Other children from nearby *sitios* or communities also become acquainted about being a *batang tekno* through recommendations of their respective pastors. The interviewing of the parents, guardians, and children is conducted even in such cases.

Being a *batang tekno* or a scholar has no grade requirement (if possible a passing grade is enough) even when the time they are first accepted as scholars in the roster since when you become a *batang tekno* the status can be renewed and you can receive grants again every school year and thus can maintain the scholar standing throughout the entire academic period. But if there are noncompliances and breaking of the rules on the part of the parents or of their children the scholarship privileges are cut off.

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As noted by Goffman (1961) “The handling of many human needs by the bureaucratic organization of whole blocks of people... is the key fact of total institution” (18). And all needs are being organized by the institution. In like fashion, the Teknotropheo Missions has complete provisions for a *batang tekno* and these are basically composed of the following: payment of tuition fees, school uniforms, school supplies, and partly of food. School project expenses on the other hand shall be shouldered by the parents. Parents are also asked to contribute some rice for their children’s meals.

There is an agreement or the so-called “Terms and Conditions” (see Fig. 2) which serves as a guide of actions or rules of behavior (“norms”) that are given and discussed to the parents by the Teknotropheo workers during the interview. Here, the staff sees to it that the parents and/or the children will really understand their vision-mission for them specifically in “rearing up the young” or in “bringing up the children.” Through this the staff conveys to parents that their participation in any Teknotropheo activities is greatly needed. The parents of the *batang tekno* are sought for their involvement in the “total development” of their children by also reporting to the Center and in attending meetings. It is their presence in any Teknotropheo Missions program which supports the child and is thus valued.

The *Batang Tekno* Guidelines which are at the outset discussed with the parents encompass sets of rules for them and their children. These are “house rules” presented during the admission procedure in an institution which prepare a member to get ready in starting to living a life by the rule (Goffman, 1961). Parents of *batang tekno* are expected to help in household chores at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. This entails helping in the preparation and/or cooking of food every meal (breakfast, lunch, and supper), washing and ironing of clothes of their scholar children, and lastly, in cleaning the whole building like sweeping and mopping of floor tiles. Whenever Teknotropheo Missions need their help, the Mangyan parents come to assist them. I saw some Mangyan fathers, for instance, who help in carpentry works at Teknotropheo—fixing water pipes, electrical wires, and the like. I also learned from the staffs that they were also involved in constructing their building at Teknotropheo Center and at their church at Sitio Magnot. Some parents also who are able to bring food can contribute rice, vegetables, or fruit.



**MGA GABAY AT PATAKARAN PARA SA MGA
BATANG TEKNO ISKOLARS AT MAGULANG**

1. Ang absences ng BT na palalagasin ng Tekno ay 5 hanggang 10 lamang, maliban kung may sakit o kalamidad. Pag lumagpas sa 10 absences, ay ititiwalag na ng Teknotropheo o disqualified na sa Tekno, ngunit maari pang ituloy ang pag-aaral na wala ng tulong ang Tekno. Gayundin, ang absences ng magulang sa kanyang assignment ng pagtulong sa anak ay hanggang 10 din. Pag lumagpas ng 10, ang anak ay ititiwalag na kahit ang anak ay walang 10 absences. Ngunit maari pang ituloy ang pag-aaral na wala ng tulong ang Tekno.
2. May schedule na susundin ang mg Batang Tekno para sa kanilang paglago sa lahat ng aspeto ng buhay.
3. Kapag bumagsak ng 2 beses ang BT, siya ay ititiwalag na sa Tekno. Ngunit maari pa niyang ituloy ang pag-aaral na wala ng tulong ang Tekno.
4. Pag sumuway ang BT sa mga pagsasanay at patakaran ng Tekno, siya ay didisiplinahan.
5. Kapag nanigaw (pag lalaki) o nagpaligaw (pag babae), una ay pagsasabihan; pag di nakinig ang ikalawa ay bibigyan ng warning at suspension; kapag di uli nakinig ang ikatlo ay ititiwalag na. Ngunit siya ay maari pang magpatuloy ng pag-aaral na wala ng tulong sa Tekno.
6. Kapag umalis ng walang paalam- una siya ay pagsasabihan; ikalawa-siya ay bibigyan ng warning at parusa at ikatlo siya ay ititiwalag. Ngunit maari pa siyang magpatuloy ng pag-aaral na wala ng tulong ang Tekno.
7. Dadalo sa miting ang mga magulang, minsan isang buwan.

1. Tutulong ang mga magulang sa pagluluto, paglalaba at paglilinis sa Tekno Center. Ang kanyang magulang ay magbibigay ng bahaging tulong sa kanyang pag aaral gaya ng mga sumusunod:

- a. For stay-in share = sa loob ng 10 buwan, 2 ½ cavans of rice or 1 cavan lang kung di kaya
- b. for uwian kids = sa loob ng 10 buwan, 38.75 kilos or kung di kaya 25 kilos of rice

notes: 1. stay-in kids rice budget for 1 school year- 2 na half cavans of rice 11.7 kilos
2. uwian kid's rice budget for 1 school year- 38.75 kilos halos 1 cavan
(tatal naman pag nasa kanila at di nagaaral ay pinapakam di naman ng ang bata kaya ibigay na sa Tekno ang kanyang kakain kung siya ay matatanggap sa BK iskolar)

SUMASANG-AYON:

<p><u>Bong Mariano</u> Batang Tekno Printed Name & Signature</p>	<p><u>AIVIE MARIANO</u> Magulang Printed Name & Signature</p>	<p>Peña: 6/2/07</p>
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NOTED BY:

<p>_____ Tekno Worker Printed Name & Signature</p>	<p><u>Ad</u> Tekno Worker Printed Name & Signature</p>
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Fig. 2. Sample Copy of *Batang Tekno* Rules and Guidelines

As much as possible, the Teknotropheo Missions encourages “100 percent participation from the kids who are participating in the programs by following our rules and regulations for them; we have schedules to follow; disciplinary acts if they disobey,” says the founding director. In implementing the programs for *batang tekno*, they see to it that they give their “best to train them, teach them, nurture them, and provide all their needs. We discipline them and encourage them to grow in all areas. Those parents and kids who want to be developed to be better persons are eager to join our programs,” she further articulated.

It must be noted in the Guidelines that the child should limit his/her absences from five to ten times only throughout the entire school year and this covers the months of June to March of the next year. However, unless he/she is sick or calamity permits the reason of being absent such case is considered an exception. When absences of a child exceed the tenth time the Teknotropheo Missions will disqualify him/her as being “*Batang Tekno*.” This is also the rule observed with regard to the schedule of the parents in performing household duties at Teknotropheo Center (see Rules 1, 7 and I). Nonetheless, the mission organization clarifies to them that they can still continue with their studies or schooling except that without their assistance anymore.



3.4 Two Kinds of *Batang Tekno*: “Stay-in” and “Uwian”

There are two kinds of *batang tekno*: a student who is “stay-in” or a scholar who is non-resident or “uwian.” During the interview stage the parents or sometimes the students can decide what kind of a *batang tekno* they would want to be during the entire school year. They are being asked about it at the onset and this status can be negotiated.

In the survey, it appeared that not all the households in the community are affiliated with Teknotropheo Missions. Although most of them are associated with Teknotropheo Missions at 30 households (68.2%), a fifth was with the affiliated with Bethany Baptist, (9 households or 20.5%), while a few are affiliated with neither, that is 5 households, according to survey, have no affiliation (11.4%). The number of households with children of schooling age is 32 and most of the children by the household respondents (family representative) as appeared in the survey are not *batang tekno* (68%). The most common reason why their children are not *batang tekno* is because most of these respondents have children who are not studying yet (either infants or under the literacy class program).

The number of households with children of schooling age but are not participating in the *Batang Tekno* program is 10 households. There are also participants of the *Batang Tekno* program who are not from the community of Sitio Magnot; these participants are numbered at 9 and are from different Mangyan communities within Abra de Ilog.

The number of *Batang Tekno* during the fieldwork period (SY 2007-2008) is fifty-one (51) students (see Table 1). Thirty (30) of these students are staying at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center in Poblacion (town), seventeen (17) of them are boys and thirteen (13) are girls. Twenty-one (21) students are *uwian*, or those scholars who go back home in Sitio Magnot after their classes in the afternoon: nine (9) are boys and eleven (11) are girls. There is one scholar who is also numbered as non-resident and is the *batang tekno* taking up a vocational course in Manila.

Table 1. List of *Batang Tekno* During Fieldwork (SY 2007-2008).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Stay-in</u>	<u>Non-resident</u> (<i>uwian</i>)
*Not from Sitio Magnot				
Esmart Wagwag	Prep / kinder	Jan. 06, 2002	Yes	
Melanie Mariano	Grade 1	Apr. 24, 1998		Yes
Ethel Gracia	Grade 1	Dec. 3, 1998		Yes
Ronald Rubio	Grade 1	July 30, 1998		Yes
Margie Rubio	Grade 1	Sept. 5, 1996	Yes	
Rhea Agustin	Grade 1	Sept. 14, 1998		Yes
Orlan Wagawag	Grade 1	Nov. 16, 1995		Yes
Rona Canuyan	Grade 1	Dec. 20, 1998	Yes	
Abel Santos	Grade 1	Aug. 13, 1999		Yes
Laila Baylon	Grade 1	April 4, 1999		Yes
Emer Baylon	Grade 1	June 20, 1997		Yes
Meraly Mariano	Grade 1	Dec. 24, 2000	Yes	
Jay Canuyan	Grade 1	Nov. 15, 1996		Yes
Jessa Wagwag	Grade 2	June 24, 1999	Yes	
Michael Garcia	Grade 2	Nov. 12, 1998	Yes	
Dayo Canuyan	Grade 2	July 1, 1993	Yes	
*Leny-An Malago	Grade 2	Sept. 10, 1997	Yes	
Raki Mariano	Grade 2	July 5, 1997		Yes
Joseph Agustin	Grade 3	Aug. 13, 1998	Yes	

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Jerson Agustin	Grade 3	May 16, 1994	Yes	
Lenlen Mariano	Grade 3	May 12, 1997		Yes
Donna Mariano	Grade 3	May 27, 1996		Yes
Baby Jane Panday	Grade 3	May 30, 1999		Yes
Edmund Wagwag	Grade 3	May 12, 1997	Yes	
Esmael Wagwag	Grade 3	May 26, 1999	Yes	
Karen Mariano	Grade 3	July 5, 1994		Yes
Arnold Agustin	Grade 3	Jan. 14, 1997	Yes	
Eralyn Panday	Grade 4	Oct. 15, 1996		Yes
Obet Canuyan	Grade 4	Aug. 10, 1992	Yes	
Rodel Agustin	Grade 4	June 29, 1994		Yes
Renato Agustin	Grade 4	Dec. 6, 1996		Yes
Minda Santos	Grade 4	Apr. 19, 1995		Yes
Bonining Canuyan	Grade 4	Nov. 18, 1992		Yes
Melchor Garcia	Grade 5	June 18, 1994	Yes	
JR Rubio	Grade 5	Mar. 5, 1985		Yes
Bobby Rubio	Grade 5	Oct. 28, 1990	Yes	
Lilibeth Malago	Grade 5	Mar. 20, 1992	Yes	
*Maribel de Jesus	Grade 5	Dec. 20, 1989	Yes	
Maylet Canuyan	Grade 5	May 2, 1991	Yes	
Jermie Wagwag	Grade 6	June 6, 1992	Yes	
Irene Wagwag	Grade 6	Aug. 12, 1992	Yes	
Hervacio Agustin	1 st year h-s	July 17, 1992	Yes	
*Dividora Tumbaga	1 st year h-s	Oct. 2, 1991	Yes	
*Ruth Tumbaga	1 st year h-s	May 14, 1991	Yes	
Arthur Agustin	1 st year h-s	June 1, 1992	Yes	
*Edel Marasigan	1 st year h-s	May 2, 1991	Yes	
*Simon Malago	2 nd year h-s	Dec. 10, 1987	Yes	
*Ariel Marasigan	2 nd year h-s	June 12, 1989	Yes	
*Melia Panaligan	2 nd year h-s	April 17, 1989	Yes	
*Angelyn Carculan	3 rd year h-s	Aug. 28, 1992	Yes	
Herbeboy Agustin	h-s grad / vocational	Sept. 1, 1989		(Manila)

A *batang tekno* becomes “stay-in” when during the interview both the parents and the student, opt for the children to reside in town. Different cases call for this arrangement.

When a student needs to travel thirty minutes or more to reach the school from his/her respective community, he/she shall be accommodated as “stay-in.” In other instances, parents requesting that their children stay at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. This usually happens in the case when both parents have to work in the field all throughout the day and thus have no time to go back home or seldom can visit their house to take care of their children. Other cases involve households where almost all of their children are scholars in the family.

This means that students will leave their respective *sitios* or communities during the week. A *batang tekno* has a weekly schedule in going back to their families in their particular settlements. During weekends, a *batang tekno* leaves the Teknotropheo Center on a Friday and returns on Sunday afternoon when church activities are through. A transportation allowance is provided.

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The stay-in students are regarded as becoming more like their lowland counterparts. This is because of the result of their frequent first-hand contact with them. This process of acculturation of “living-like-the-Tagalogs” is highly influenced by their “living-with-the-Tagalogs” in town.

The “disciplining” of stay-in students is more observed inside the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. This is to guarantee obedience from the kids who are being supervised by the staffs especially in training them to observe rules and remind them of these from time to time.

Inside the Center, a *batang tekno* is expected to perform household chores or duties assigned to him/her. Their names and the corresponding schedule of a particular daily task are posted at the bulletin board (see Fig. 2, rule 2). They may be assigned to clean the bathroom, lavatory, comfort room, kitchen area, multipurpose room, to sweep the backyard and the front area, to do the cooking and serving of food every meal time, to do the laundry, dishwashing, and mop the floor tiles (usually delegated to boys). When observed tardiness and noncompliance of these assigned tasks are committed by a *batang tekno*, the child usually receives reprimands from the staff members and the worst offenses may disqualify him/her from being a scholar.

The Teknotropheo Missions Development Center serves as abode for the Iraya Mangyan youth and children as one of the stipulations of being a *batang tekno*. Aside from this, the building is a venue for conducting training and discipleship programs as well as housing for the staff members. For the male staff, visitors, *batang tekno*, a separate house quarter is provided for them which is just a few steps away from the ‘main’ Teknotropheo Missions Development Center.



Fig. 3. Lobby of the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center

The Teknotropheo Center is a three storey building that includes facilities like the multi-purpose room, an office or the computer room, a lounge area (lobby), a clinic or the medicine storage, a common storage or *bodega*, a dining hall, and four comfort rooms or bathrooms. There are two comfort rooms designated boys and girls. The other comfort room is allotted for the staff, visitors, and volunteers. A separate bathroom is for the Teknotropheo Missions Director. A dirty kitchen or where the dishwashing and cooking are done is found at the back of the building. All these are found at the first level (see Fig. 3).

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The bulletin board is located at the lounge area where the announcements are posted. The daily schedules (helping in cooking, serving, and dishwashing, collection of garbage and maintenance of the *bodega*, cleaning of all comfort rooms, lavatory, bathroom, backyard and front yard, all windows, walls, ceilings, and the corresponding names of the *batang tekno* are here. The assigned housekeeping chores of their parents are also announced.

A staff member told me that with this, they instill discipline into their scholars. She said “*Discipline lang talaga ang pagpapa-stay sa center*” (*You are indeed responsible for disciplining the scholars at the missions center*). This echoes how Foucault (1977) suggests that discipline among prisoners, soldiers, or students placed in a restricted physical setting was made to exercise and be developed among them training, observation, and control among members where even the distribution of spaces or “partitioning” of locations imply how can each individual be located and supervised and thus the “guaranteed” obedience of the members (141).

The dining hall also has a reminder written in Filipino about the general guidelines a *batang tekno* must observe (see Fig. 4). In addition to this there are rules posted on the walls of the kitchen area, comfort rooms and the multipurpose room concerning instructions on how to clean them. There is also a shoe rack on the first floor labeled with the names of the students and the staff members where the footwear must be properly placed. The *bodega* is also with labels where a dustpan or a plastic bag must placed. The same goes with the cabinets where school supplies or medicines are found.

1. Laging magpaalam pag aalis, kahit bibili lang sa tindahan, kailangang magpaalam din.
2. Excused ang maysakit na di makabangon, mahina ang katawan at kailangan magpahinga.
3. Pag may bagyo excused din.
4. Palaging tignan ang mga schedule.
5. Palaging magpirma sa attendance sheet at tatawagin ang pangalan pagkapirma.
6. Bawal ang umutot sa loob ng Tekno Mission Center. Lumabas ng tahimik pag uutot.
7. Diretso sa school pagpasok, huwag dumaan sa kung saan saan, at huwag maglalakwatsa. May nagbabantay sa inyo!
8. Palaging manalangin humingi ng karunungan sa pag-aaral.

(English translation)

1. Always ask permission when leaving, even just to buy something from the store, ask also for permission.
2. Excused are those who are sick and not feeling well, and need bed rest.
3. Excused also when there is typhoon.
4. Always take a look at the schedules.
5. Always sign at the attendance sheet once your name is called.
6. It is prohibited to fart inside Teknotropheo Mission Center. Leave quietly when farting.
7. Go straight to school during class, do not go to other places. Somebody is watching over you!
8. Always pray and ask wisdom for your studies.

Fig. 4. An example of a poster-reminder at the Dining Hall

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Reminders which are indications of how particular and important are each one of these needs to be observed aside from the details (as rules) set to them in the Terms and Conditions. Foucault (1977) claims that even “little things” like what is stated above are use for the “control and use of men” (141). By doing this, discipline evokes a characteristic of “dissociating” power from the body and that is from the body of an individual where it generates “subjected and practised bodies” or “docile bodies” (138).

At the second level of the building are five bedrooms. Two bedrooms are allotted for the students where one room can accommodate a minimum of five and a maximum of ten *batang tekno*. These are for young ladies only. The young men live at the extension quarter with a male staff member who is usually a pastor. It is along the same street.

The multipurpose room on the other hand serves as a bedroom for the younger kids during sleeping time. Other bedrooms at the second floor are designated for the staff. There is also another room which functions as an office and sometimes serves as the meeting area.

Inside the two bedrooms is found a “*Batang Tekno* Schedule” posted on the wall (see Fig. 5). The schedules as “time-table,” according to Foucault (1977), are used to practice or discipline one’s own body in “efficiency” and “speed” (152). A kind of discipline among *batang tekno* who are being taught at the Center to a productive use of “correct” time and that everything is followed and no one must remain idle.

<i>Batang Tekno</i> Schedule:
5:00 am – Wake Up and Wash Up
5:15-5:30 – Group Devotion
5:30-6:00 – Take a bath! Dress up!
6:00-6:45 – Breakfast
6:50 – Go to school!
11:00-12:00 – Tutorial class for Grade 1 & 2
12:00-1:00 – Lunch time
1:00-1:20 – English class for all
1:25 – Go to school!
4:00-5:30 – Clean up (cleanliness, orderliness, and beautification project)
6:00-7:00 – Group Devotion
7:00-8:00 – Dinner time
8:00-9:30 – Study time
9:30 pm – Sleeping time! Lights off! And mouths off!

Fig. 5. Schedule of a (stay-in) “*Batang Tekno*”

The third floor is an open area or the purported rooftop where social activities like meetings or group devotion with *batang tekno* take place. This can also serve as a play area for the younger kids whereas for the youth it is a favorite spot or *tambayan*. Here they can spend their time singing, laughing, and swapping or sharing of stories during their idle moments that usually happen at the end of the day.

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The life of the *uwian* (non-resident) student on the other hand is considerably very different from that of the life of *batang tekno* “stay-in” students. They arrive at the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center at around seven o’ clock in the morning via public transport accessible in town, usually a tricycle.

Younger kids are the majority of *uwian* students although there are also young children staying at the Center. In this situation, parents shoulder the “responsibility” of giving primary care and/or instructions to the children since they are still in the supervision of their parents in their own *sitios*. But when they reach Teknotropheo Missions Development Center the non-resident students are no exception from following certain rules.

A *batang tekno* “*uwian*” student is required to come to school or at the Teknotropheo Missions Development Center clean. It means that they have already taken their baths or they have washed their face and combed their hair. (For stay-in students taking a bath is done twice a day: before they go to school and before their evening devotion starts.)

Each of the children arrives at Teknotropheo in civilian clothes. This implies that wearing of school uniforms takes place at Teknotropheo Center. They also come with their school bags and in footwear (see Fig. 6). Wearing of slippers or shoes will do as long as they do not go to school barefoot.



Fig. 6. “Batang Tekno” in school uniforms

During breakfast both stay-in and non-residents get their share of food (usually packed bread or sandwiches) on the table and affix their signatures beside their name in a list of all *batang tekno* students. This is to determine how many *batang tekno* are present during the day and how many received their share of food. This actually serves as an attendance list.

At lunch time, things are different. All *batang tekno* fall in line before entering the dining hall. Usually an older student holds an attendance sheet where names are called out. When the name of the student is called,

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his/her fingernails are checked by an assigned “checker.” The nails are inspected if these are well trimmed and clean. If these are not, a warning is given to the student.

The “checker” then places a check beside their names. This serves as their attendance for the day. When a *batang tekno* enters the hall he/she finds his/her place to sit in. During this time the assigned group of students has already prepared the food on the table with the help of the assigned parents who did the cooking as well.

Each one has a plate with a cup of rice and a regulated amount of dish or a viand, taking into consideration that one gets an equal share of food. When there is extra rice or excess viand from the dish, anyone can get second servings. This also goes for desserts or *pasalubong* of chocolates or candies from the staff or visitors. All *batang tekno* are required to use spoon and fork when eating. This is part of their training which they do not usually practice at home. For this, some *batang tekno* who are not used to using utensils are reprimanded.

Assigned household chores follow the eating of supper meal. Young ladies start piling up plates while bringing these to the dishwashing area whereas young men mop the floor tiles.

The *uwian* students during this time are already in their respective houses. After their classes in the afternoon (usually at four o’ clock and before it gets dark), they go back to Teknotropheo Center to change from their school uniform into civilian clothes. I observed other students go straight home after school.

3.5 Analysis of the Results

With regard to the Teknotropheo Mission’s intention of creating a *batang tekno* among these Iraya Mangyan youth and children, certain aspects to them are indeed being confronted with the value system that they already possess. A set of opposing values or forces is thus being recognized between the two worlds of the *batang tekno*—that is, between their “home world” and the “institutional world”.

Presented in the table below are some points for comparison wherein the Iraya Mangyans are being challenged indeed with regard to the culture and lifeways that they already have in the community vis-a-vis the ‘expected’ life that the ‘institutional world’ asks of them.

Table 2. The Life of *Batang Tekno* Between “Home World” and “Institutional World”

Home World (Mangyan ways / community life)	Institutional World (<i>Tekno</i> life / urban values)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swidden farming as livelihood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Riddance of farm work / worth on being schooled (non-farm work jobs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of early marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early courtship / marriage is disallowed (not encouraged)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freedom to manage own time (free-flowing activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structured and predetermined set of schedule of activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playing around with anything like sand, woods, pets, etc. (dirty finger nails) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playing with text cards, paper dolls, rubber bands, etc. (fingers are being checked: practice of hygiene)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hardly take a bath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of taking a bath twice a day (use of deodorant, cologne, soap and shampoo, etc.)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clothes, kitchen utensils, cluttered around their houses (not much on partition of things and spaces) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is division of spaces and use of cabinets, labeling, etc. (cleanliness, orderliness is observed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No electrical power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With electricity and can watch television shows, listen to radio, use of washing machines, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Root crops and vegetable tops as main food diet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tasty bread, hotdogs, chocolates, candies, <i>chichirias</i>, canned goods, noodles, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mealtime at least once (or twice) a day with immense amount of food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mealtimes thrice a day and with regulated amount of food
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free to use hands while eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of using spoon and fork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lenient (tolerant) way of disciplining behavior (less reprimand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observance of set rules and guidelines; non-conformity to the rules means disobedience with corresponding warning or punishment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free to help families (parents) in domestic work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimal time of performing household chores at home

The set-up of Teknotropheo Missions as a “total institution” creates a tension among *batang tekno* wherein there is an incompatibility on the set of values accessible to them through the training of their behavior inside the missions center which involves the making of another person (being) apart from what (or who) they are within their settlements in the community and as influenced further via their first-hand social contact with the lowland counterparts in town.

According to Goffman (1961), “total institutions do not substitute their own unique culture for something already formed” (23) and thus can create tensions between two worlds—that is between home world and institutional world. Since the disciplining on an individual marks an obligation to be of a given character or being in the given realm, the following discussions depict how a *batang tekno* becomes challenged to live in an institutionalized world presented to him or her by Teknotropheo Missions. As an individual, he or she (still) carries the culture of his or her own home world (e.g., Mangyan ways, community life, etc.). Goffman further asserts that there will always be members “who are felt not to embrace sufficiently a social entity to which they belong” (174).

Although there is a deliberate “pattern” or “regimentation” in a total institution, differences inevitably elucidate the actions of its members. In one of the studies on boarding school education it really appeared that: “Nobody who has lived for even a short time in a boarding school would regard its members as being all alike” (Wolfenden, 1948). Apparently, the “rules” in a total institution enforce a regulated activity in “unison” and see to it that each member conforms. When rules of conduct are recognized in an institution, each specification implies that a person is robbed of his or her opportunity to exercise autonomy; it is thus weakened since control of behavior is made by the institution which suggests making small adjustive movements. However, it appears that a member is still his or her own individual self or body. Along with this is a person’s developing dilemma on whose power is influential over him or her: individual or institutional power?

The process of social control used to “produce” a new individual is thus achieved to varying degrees depending on how much time they spend in the institution (e.g. stay-in versus ‘*uwian*’ or non-resident scholars). To be presented in this chapter are some cases of individual *batang tekno* who disobeyed particular rules but have realized that they wished to continue schooling and thus did remain as “*Batang Tekno*.”

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Despite of the rules being set forth by Teknotropheo Missions for their members, different cases illustrate how actors (*batang tekno*) try to place the rules in their own hands and practice their sense of agency or “free will.” The following instances show the movement of opposing forces.

The Case of Jessica

Jessica is a seventeen-year old student residing at Teknotropheo Missions Development Center. She is one of the long-staying scholars who is “stay-in”. One instance, she asked permission to the staff to take a stroll in town (“*gala*”). She was then allowed to do so. She was also aware that she needed to be back at a specified time that day. One week passed that Jessica only came back to the Teknotropheo Center. She told her own reasons to visit her family in their community upon asking for forgiveness to the staff because she knew that she has violated a certain rule that may lead her to disqualification of being a scholar (see Fig. 2, rule 6). The staff indeed got mad at what she did but after a while she won their hearts to bring her back in the scholarship list.

When I learned about the case of Jessica, the staff told me that sometimes one has really to practice patience in dealing with the Mangyans. They further said that it was needful for you to take to your words and be firm in what you have already said. That is why they tend to be “strict” as much as possible. “*Ang mga batang tekno pinapagalitan talaga dapat kapag may nababaling mga rules... Gaya niyan, ang sinabi mag-galâ lang kaso hindi na bumalik! Out na dapat yun sa Tekno, pero may grace pa rin.*” (The *batang tekno* should really get reprimanded when they break certain rules... For instance, there’s one who told us to take a stroll in town but she did not come back right away! She is considered disqualified at Teknotropheo, but sometimes we extend grace.) The staff would sometimes be more considerate to them because they say that these problems that they encounter with *batang tekno* are linked to their poor development in the early childhood due to non-access to basic literacy and poor nutrition.

The Cases of Charles and Jonathan

Charles is sixteen years old, a “stay-in” *batang tekno* who is at the grade six level. During his stay at Teknotropheo Missions he still goes on with his own vices like smoking, drinking and not taking his studies seriously (see Figure 2, rules 2, 4, and 6). He likes to go with his peers traveling to different places in Mindoro like Calapan and Puerto Galera and even as far as Batangas. He admits that many times he was grounded for disqualification but still he continues his studies by being a *batang tekno*.

Jonathan has a similar line of story. He is now eighteen years old but in his grade five level. He admits that for three consecutive years he stopped being a scholar. He smoked before and used to gamble. He eventually made an appeal to Teknotropheo Missions to continue on his studies and he was re-admitted.

As far as Teknotropheo Missions is concerned, they are looking after what they desire to see among these Iraya Mangyans a so-called “Christlike character.” For them, they take great delight in seeing these Iraya Mangyan youth and children improving their lives, not doing all of their vices, and that they excel in school. Such things happened to Charles and Jonathan; they treat these as a challenge to further put “hope” or a chance for the other young students. Even if they are already old for their grade level, if the Teknotropheo Missions staff sees a sincere heart seeking forgiveness, they would grant a second chance for their scholarship. For the boys, the Teknotropheo staffs get their personal assessment from the pastor who is

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with them at the males' quarters. The time that the pastor reports any improvement with regard to some "delinquent" behaviors, the staffs then talk about it and decide according to their own progress in complying with the rules.

The "reproduction of the system" is only one of what the practice theory is asserting (Ortner, 1994). The different cases cited above reveal the exercise of the "human agency"—individual power, as exemplified by these *batang tekno*. The cases of Jessica, Charles and Jonathan demonstrate how the performance of a certain behavior or action has challenged a particular line of culture, dealing with another system of explicit rules that go against with their own personal needs, wants, and desires. They further exemplified that they can put "power" in their own hands, intentional yet were inadequate still.

There are instances seen among *batang tekno* in how the blossoming of unexpected behaviors were revealed in their exercise of sense of autonomy or personal freedom as members of the mission organization; their compliance to the rules remains certain as they yearn to finish their schooling and pursue personal dreams in the future. Significantly, motivations for actions arise among and by the Iraya Mangyans as members of Teknotropheo Missions which are evidently rooted in their interest to have formal education training beyond primary level through the assistance of the mission organization. Ortner (1994) purports that: "The idea that actors are always pressing claims, pursuing goals, advancing purposes, and the like may simply be an overly energetic (and overly political) view of how and why people act..." (395).

The so-called dominating value among these Iraya Mangyans now is to be part of an overall class structure that manifests "cultural (symbolic) capital" turned to "economic capital" (see Bourdieu, 1977) as they see formal education and the lowland manner of living as a stepping stone in being assimilated or having a sense of place and acceptance to the "modernized" world. Through the perspectives of the mission organization and appreciating the importance of being "schooled," an Iraya Mangyan scholar has generated a value that undergoing formal education training produces an investment that can provide an upward (social and economic) mobility to them. What happens is that even if book-learning does not prepare them for agricultural field or farm work or even the training learned from Teknotropheo Missions has a different means of doing activities in a day, from the time flows and the less regulated daily chores at home, it nevertheless caused them to give worth to the schooling of being a *batang tekno*. This makes them have an easy access and/or opportunity for wealth in the coming years.

To the parents, it assures them that what they cannot give or provide to their children were taken over by the Teknotropheo Missions, even the part of "disciplining" their own children. A mother of two *batang tekno* further asserts this thought: "*Kahit sa tingin ng iba ay mahigpit, sa akin nakikita ko disiplinado ang mga bata*" (Even if others consider it (the rules) as strict, as for me it makes my children become disciplined.).

Further, when mixed with the non-Mangyans in town, one can barely distinguish between the Iraya Mangyans and the "modernized" *batang tekno*. This is not only limited to the tangible stuffs that they are learning to have but also because of the social recognition they are achieving as *batang tekno*. These kids especially when in group with their non-Mangyan classmates enjoy socializing with one another during recess (break) time where they can spend more time playing together.

Other *batang tekno* can proudly introduce me to their non-Mangyan classmates and say to me that they are "best friends." This observation was confirmed by a grade school teacher who said to me "*Ngayon kasi hindi mo na makikita ang discrimination sa kanila (Mangyans) hindi kagaya noon.*" (Today you cannot notice any discrimination towards them (Mangyans) unlike before.) The *batang tekno* also have admirers from their lowland counterparts showing how they are even being well-liked by their non-Mangyan classmates.

This section has recognized how a transformation of the *batang tekno* can happen because of placing them inside a total institution, such as the Teknotropheo Missions Developing Center. The discussion presented

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above demonstrates how the mission center arrives at what Goffman (1961) is saying as a “forcing house for changing persons” (22) and becomes powerful to produce a new self. With this, some observable changes among the *batang tekno* and their parents were noted and through the *batang tekno* program of the mission organization, it has made the Iraya Mangyan families to veer away from their former ways of life as they are being penetrated and becoming more accustomed to the ways of their lowland counterpart, having a mainstream culture.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study aimed to discuss and understand how the mission works or programs of Teknotropheo Missions among the Iraya Mangyan children and families—specifically the “*Batang Tekno*” program—have enabled the mission organization to succeed in its assimilation agenda among the *batang tekno* and their parents and achieve a transformation of values: this can be seen in the decreased value of doing farm work in the uplands, their practice of grooming and/or hygiene, and use of personal accessories. When mingling with the lowlanders, they have shown improved social skills and improved academic standing and as well as being able to talk with foreign visitors too, without being shy.

The key element of the mission organization’s strategy is to use the ‘Boarding House’ as a “total institution” (Goffman, 1961). *Batang Tekno* as a program achieves a transformation not only of Iraya Mangyan children but also of their parents through their conformity or obedience to the rules while staying in the Center. The transformation is most apparent among the *batang tekno* who are the “stay-in” scholars as compared to the “*uwian*” or non-resident scholars who find it difficult to embrace the new culture since the disciplining carried over to them is only limited during the day and they come back in their own families immediately. These students who go home at the end of the day and instead of staying at Teknotropheo Center can have personal freedom when outside the institution and the power (influence) of the mission organization to them is somewhat diminished.

The second objective of the study was to examine how the engagement of the Teknotropheo workers among the *batang tekno* and their families influenced them to participate in the mission organization’s various programs, in particular, the *Batang Tekno* program. This was seen through the techniques of imparting knowledge (value system) to the Iraya Mangyan children and families (e.g. education and religion) that have shaped the behaviors of the latter to act and accept the plans (programs) of the institution for them. It has also paved the way to have a “cooperative activity” or conduct (Goffman, 1959) between the two since Iraya Mangyan parents and elders contribute their service such as doing household chores at the mission center, attending meetings called by Teknotropheo, and other assistance like giving in their share of food for their children to recompense the mission work of Teknotropheo among them.

The study has also pointed out that there are sometimes *batang tekno* who break, resist, or rebel against the rules. This has something to do with the contestation of whose power is more influential over them. It most definitely suggests that their own personal autonomy is being challenged by the power (control) of the institution over them in obeying stated rules. The cases that were illustrated above are indeed a demonstration of the power that is being challenged, between the Teknotropheo staff and the *batang tekno*. Certainly, the scholars have displayed a sense of agency among them. However, because of their desire to finish schooling, these individuals who disobeyed the stated rules in the Terms and Conditions of the Teknotropheo Missions remain as “*Batang Tekno*” by foregoing their personal freedom to conform and obey the rules in their total institution.

The last objective was to examine how the *Batang Tekno* program of Teknotropheo Missions results in a transformation of values of the *batang tekno* and their families along with their assimilation of lowland or mainstream culture. The Iraya Mangyan children and families have a sense of motivation to facilitate a

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transformation of their own selves to what they recognized as “good,” which have helped the institution to sustain its programs with them for more than a decade now. Based on what Ortner (1994) implies, “...actors are seen as involved in relatively far-reaching transformations of their states of being—of their relationships with things, persons, and self... it is more a matter of “becoming” than of “getting” (396). Through appreciating the importance of being schooled, a *batang tekno* absorbs the value that having formal education training produces an investment that can give him upward mobility in society.

Indeed, the *batang tekno* and their families have changed in their priorities and values in life; we could ask: are the *batang tekno* desirous of formal education training because they want to learn more? Or is it to earn more (by leaving their traditional livelihoods as Iraya Mangyan)? Is Teknotropheo Missions a resounding case of how missionaries have participated in the colonial endeavor and employed different strategies to help people to become “civilized” or “develop”? Have the Iraya Mangyan children and families who voluntarily went through the program effectively resisted oppression and exploitation? How do these children regard themselves now? Are the *Batang Tekno* still Mangyan? By blood and by kin, the answer is “yes”—the *Batang Tekno* are still Mangyan—but more and more not by the ways they live now, as especially observed among the stay-in *batang tekno*.

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