FISHING RITUAL IN A RURAL FISHING VILLAGE OF THE PHILIPPINES: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ECONOMICS CONSTRUCT

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ABSTRACT
The paper presented a construct of “Palina” fishing ritual of Tag-anongan Island in Cortes, Surigao Del Sur of the Philippines. Tag-anongan Island is fifteen minutes motorboat/pump boat ride from its neighboring Barangay (village) of Burgos. The vibrant fishing ritual of “Palina” is rich in mysticism and cultural value in the milieu of cultural appreciation. In the construct, qualitative interview and ethnographic methods were used aided by two (2) specialist or key informants. It was found out that said ritual has themes namely: spirituality, love for the environment, promotion of sustainable use of resources and strong clan/family ties. The study presented recommendations for its integration in the culture-based education and eco-tourism potentials. Development management implication was also drawn out in the areas of the community-based environmental management program and heritage conservation. Moreover, the paper bent on the discipline of Anthropological Economics as its main theoretical underpinning in an attempt to construct the “Palina” ritual.

KEY WORDS: Palina, Construct, Environment, Folk life, Diviner
I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is very rich in folk traditions either the highland areas, farming or the fishing communities. These forms of oral lore albeit across era have not change. It has been a part of the rural Philippines social milieu. Folk traditions or folklore have several genres such the urban and rural folklore dominated by various typologies such chants, epics, wise sayings, indigenous knowledge system, child-rearing practices, burial practices, and the belief system in crop production and fishing.

One of the hypotheses which can be identified for this is, it has been embedded in the Philippine folk life and orally transmitted from one generation to another. Hence form part of the Filipino social and cultural life. (Tomaquin, 2013). Folk traditions illustrated in various themes one of which the themes for the sustainable use of resources. The ritual materials which are endemic in the area like young coconut leaves, coconut shell (loho), abaca rope, animal for the sacrifice /ritual to name a few are all endemic/homegrown in the vicinity hence the staging of the fishing ritual is in harmony with the sustainable use of resources. One, of the significant theme of this form of oral tradition in the various genres, includes the sustainable use of resources such shown in the “Palina” fishing ritual. Further, the study aims to have a construct of “Palina” fishing ritual in Tag-anongan Island of the Philippines with the end view of presenting its construct, its varied themes and implications in the sustainable use of marine resources. Thus, the research endeavor was undertaken. The lore of fishing in the seascape of the Philippines is observable in the form of fishing rituals which had been a part in the psychology and worldviews of the rural fishers. These folk fishing rituals had been combined with folk religious beliefs of what sociologist called folk Christianity as narrated by Hunt, Espiritu, Quisumbing, and Green (2002) as:

“Animistic beliefs, sometimes combined with the coating of Christianity, are utilized by ordinary people who attribute magical powers to saints as well as by the specialist who goes into trance to utter prophecies or prescribed for illness. Syncretism or the combination of two or more religious beliefs in the mind of one person is obviously seen in the combination of folk religion and Christianity (Hunt, Espiritu, Quisumbing and Green, 2002) ".
Figure 1: The serenity of the Site

The Philippines is very rich in folk religious beliefs. The word “folks” mean its beliefs are homegrown in the villages merged or embedded in some church practices which the church does not sanction but in some extent tolerated as a respect of cultural uniqueness and diversity of ethno linguistic groupings of the Philippines. Take for example the loyal devotion in the “Poon Nazareno” (The Great Nazarene) which is one of the major religious event in the Philippines moreover it can be observed that folk Christianity in the said religious gathering is observable like the weaving of white cloth, wearing amulets or charm which is believed that supernatural power will be given to the devotee if he religiously attended the Panata (vow) can be considered a form of folk Christianity. The paper ventured on the discussion on the fishing ritual in the site the “Palina “. In this ritual, the value of respect for the environment as a form of utility and mysticism merged. True the tribal societies and the fishing villages/communities had considered fishing as a form of utility and a form of respect for nature as part of God’s creation. Walker, (1994) discussed this emerging school of thought as he writes:

“The concept of” nature” itself raises very difficult theological issues. "Nature" proposes a conception on the overall context of human life which has not built into dimensions of purposes, value and meaning, all which drawn from the human experience of linguistics and cultural institutions and activities. As long as "nature" was viewed as a finite order brought into being by an infinite God, and destined to serve God’s purpose, there was a place for "nature" in Judeo-Christian Tradition (Walker, 1994)
Antonio, Zipporah in her blog writes the significant family ritual before transferring in the new house which forms part in the literature of the present study in the following links and lines below:

"The belief in the supernatural and mystical is very pervasive in the Filipino culture, particularly in rural areas. Though mostly incorporated in religious rites, these beliefs also come into play when living in a new home. It is believed that a spiritual house cleansing should be done before a family moves in. (Antonio, Zipporah in http://www.zipmatch.com/blog/filipino-spiritual-house-cleansing-practices/ date accessed April 14, 2017).

In another study done by Vecaldo and Manera (2017) discussed the relevance of Indigenous healing ritual as they write:

"It becomes means to promote and reinforce social relations especially in the community where various groups of migrants abound. It becomes a way for the community members to adjust to internal integration and maintain a state of harmony. In here, the ritual operates as a social mechanism with a pivotal role in sustaining vibrant community interrelationship (Vecaldo and Manera, 2017).

On the other hand, Tomaquin (2013) discussed that Indigenous Rituals and folk traditional beliefs characterized with rich symbolism illustrate the rich Filipino folklore because the Philippine is a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse society. In this rich indigenous lore which is rich in varied cultural themes such preservation of traditional values, spirituality and strong family or clan ties thus its documentation as part of Filipino Heritage is wanting (Tomaquin, 2013). Writing and doing a research such as this is quite a personal journey for us as laypersons active in Catechism and as practicing cultural Anthropologist. Amidst of materialism as the new ideology of the times brought by a wave of changes in the internet highways traditional or old fashion spirituality provides a refuge to these challenges of the times. As an academic, we consider this as a personal journey to document
the indigenous or village homegrown ritual in fishing as a form of religious tolerance and acceptance of the diversity of Philippine folk’s life. Moreover, we found out that in the rural fishing rituals we studied and documented provided the following themes such respect for nature, respect for the ancestors, love of family/clan, and the creation message in Christian tradition is still continuing from the diviner quest through chants with the desire to protect and have a sustainable use of sea resources. One of the most important components of Peace Education is the respect of the environment and its sustainable use. The study ventured on the implications of the study for the quest of environmental peace viz a viz the symbiotic relationship of the fisher folks and the sea. Henceforth, we consider that oral traditions theme such the Palina ritual provides a nexus in the respect of the environment in the platform of sustainable use of resources based on Indigenous knowledge system, tradition and culture. Hence this study is important. The Anthropology of Economics is an emerging sub-discipline of Anthropology where the culture of the observed society in the aspects of the distribution of goods and services are keenly recorded. It is a field which interfaces the disciplines of Anthropology and Economics. This sub-discipline does not provide a sophisticated formula of economics such the elasticity of demand and the like but only a presentation of the ethnography of the culture of production. Specifically, the paper delves on the fishing ritual of “Palina”. The said fishing ritual had been a part of the seascape oral tradition of the site despite massive development in internet communication. The oral lore then of “Palina” is vibrant and its documentation is vital to foster cultural diversity. Its themes have a vast potential for integration in literature classes and in the area of values integration. Its rich theme of respect for nature while viewing it also as a utility is an illustration of sustainable concept in the utilization of marine resources. The ritual alone can a potential source of local cultural tourism attraction and can be packaged as part of local heritage conservation program/measure. Moreover, the paper bent on the discussion in anthropological and economics themes. The interface in the venue and terrain of ecological values of conservation and sustainable use of marine resources is presented in this paper. Cultural appreciation and the value of oral lore had been main themes of the paper.

The study used Economics of Anthropology perspective, in this terrain Dr. James G. Carrier in https://www.discoveranthropology.org.uk/about-anthropology/specialist-areas/economic anthropology.html writes the meaning and relevance of economic anthropology as:

“Thus, while economic anthropologists study economic processes, their approach is different from that of economists. Economists usually restrict themselves to monetary transactions and try to develop formal, abstract models of economic systems. Economic anthropologists, on the other hand, usually are concerned with all forms of production, circulation, and consumption, monetary
or not. Further, they are concerned less with developing formal models and more with trying to describe and understand economic actions in their social and cultural context.”

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The themes of fishing include primordially the sustainable use of sea resources. This theme can greatly enhance the present environmental movements. Austin (2003) considered the Marine Protected Area’s as environmental movements which the setting has one, hence environmental protection and its sustainable use had been in the contexts of the village life such on the site. Making oral literature or the lore of the fishing village as a significant component of environmental education by looking its themes which depict in the first place the respect for the environment amidst the present realities of surging tides and increasing sea levels as cited by Tomaquin (2013). Environmental education can be a successful alternative model in the community or grassroots level involvement for having a sustainable use of sea resources. The development implications of fishing rituals are enormous one: it can be a source of a tourist attraction, can be integrated into the culture-based curriculum in the field of oral literature, values education. Its theme of preserving the environment is a good component to be integrated with environmental education at the community level. Moreover, community-based tourism program can be enhanced by promoting oral kinds of literature' or folklore of the community, folklore then is important for it will be an avenue of pride and identity amidst this internet era. This study is also a means of valuing the very rich ethno linguistic grouping and diverse cultural tradition of the Philippine as diverse as it is but united as a country. Further, there is a call of the renaissance of Philippine folk literature hence the study in our humble capacity provided answers to said call. “Palina” as a genre of folklore has environmental themes which provided an indigenous manner of having a sustainable use of coastal resources: With the very homegrown fishing ritual of “Palina” commemorates the respect of
nature in looking it as a utility and sacred a sustainable. This should be safeguarded for the future generation. The study used interdisciplinary approaches in the fields of ethnography, economics likewise also development oriented. This study can be a good source of the literature of cultural studies for the future researchers. Another aspect that the study is important is its recommendation for integration the “Palina” fishing ritual in heritage conservation as part of Local Government Unit (LGU) heritage conservation program.

III. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This research inquiry presented the following tour of research questions:

1. What is the manner of the institution of “Palina” ritual?
2. What are the themes of the said ritual?
3. What are the implications of the said rituals based on the following aspects?
   3.1 Integration in the Culture and the Arts Management;
   3.2 Community Based Tourism Integration;
   3.3 Environmental Management Integration/ Sustainable Use of Marine Resources;
   3.4 Values Integration and heritage conservation;
   3.5 Indigenous teaching materials integration.
3.6 Formulation of Proposed Action for the preservation of these rituals for posterity as part of Filipino heritage

IV. ASSUMPTIONS

The study assumed that indigenous fishing ritual embedded in the culture of the setting. It is further blended with Christian beliefs of what sociologist called “Folk Christian” beliefs. Hence, it needs to be documented for posterity and as part of the heritage of Filipino nation. It is assumed further that Anthropological Economics is interconnected with the development implications which the study the delve with. It can be deduced further that development implications can be gleaned or abstracted in the varied themes of “Palina” ritual. In like manner, it can be inferred that the “Palina” ritual has a rich cultural tourism potential and likewise has a good value or material for heritage conservation.

V. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used the ethnographic design using the approaches of perception interview, interview guide scale, observation, fieldwork and the Filipino Indigenous methods of research. Non Participant observation and participant observations were used with the help camera and recorder. The study employed only two (2) key informants, free and consent was secured from the said key informants. Thus, the study used field research. Brym and Lie (2010) discussed it as a method of research based on the observation of people in their natural settings (Brym and Lie, 2010).
feminist method was also used as it gives a feminist illustration of the environment where these rich folk rituals were robustly practice. Culture Construct was also used as a method. Culture Construct refers to the idea that the characteristics of people attribute to social categories as gender, illness, death, the status of women; the status of men is culturally defined (http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/anth370/gloss.html). The study also used the approaches of Cultural Ecology which refers to the study of human integration with the ecosystem to determine how nature influences and influenced by social organization and culture (http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/anth370/gloss.html). This research endeavor and guarantees the congeniality of the Key Informants (KI) as Babbie (2002) writes: “Confidentiality, a research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify given person responses but promises not to do so publicly (Babbie, 2002).

The study is also the emic approach. A research strategy that focuses on native explanations and criteria of significance (Kottack, 2004). Likewise, it also used the etic approach; a research strategy that empathizes the observer’s rather the nature of explanations, categories, and criteria of significance (Kottack 2004). Cultural ecology was drawn out in the study. Carol R. Ember, Melvin Ember, and Peter Peregrine as they explained that cultural ecology is the analysis of the relationships between culture and the environment.

VI. THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The following research procedure was observed:
A. Informing and seeking the approval from the community leader/village leader for the intent of the research;
B. identifying the Key Informants;
C. Seeking Informed Consent from the latter;
D. Conducting the field research;
E. Terminating or ending the research.

VII. THE SETTING

The Study was conducted in Tag-anongan Island which is 15- 20 minutes of pump boat ride from the Barangay (village) of Burgos which serve as the mainland. Fishing is the dominant occupation in the site supplemented with coconut farming.

VIII. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following theories were examined in this research endeavor:

* Humanism. Any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, and dignity predominate. (http://www.dictionary.com/browse/humanism)
* Symbolic Interactions. Henslin (2005) discussed it as a Theoretical Perspective in which society is viewed as composed of symbols that people use to establish meaning, develop their views of the world and communicate with one another (Henslin, 2005).

* Functional Analysis. Henslin (2005) discussed it as a theoretical framework in which society is viewed as composed of various parts, each with a function that, when fulfilled, contributes to society's equilibrium, also known as functionalism (Henslin, 2005).

* Social Constructionist. Sociologist argued that apparently natural or innate features of life are often sustained by social processes that vary historically and culturally (Brym and Lie, 2010).

* Utilitarianism. A doctrine that the useful is the good and that the determining consideration of right conduct should be the usefulness of its consequences; specifically: a theory that the aim of action should be the largest possible balance of pleasure over pain or the greatest happiness of the greatest number (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/utilitarianism).

* Micro theory. A theory aimed at understanding social life at the intimate level of individuals and their interactions (Babbie, 2002).

IX. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Anting-Anting. This refers to amulets of the diviner. It is believed it can give them more spiritual wisdom and expert in the oral tradition such in farming or fishing rituals.

Diviner. This refers to the Shaman or the specialist of the sacred prayer (orascion).

Folk Christianity. The influenced and integration of Christians beliefs or dogma in the indigenous fishing rituals such the “Palina.” This is much more common in countries of Latin America and the Philippines resulted to the fact that before the Spanish colonization indigenous or homegrown beliefs systems were vibrant and later blended with Christian beliefs, the religion of the colonizer.

Grasya sa Dagat. This refers to the harvest from the sea from fishing expeditions.

May Kinaadman. This refers to the diviner or specialist. He is endowed with special skills of rituals and oral lore in fishing.

Orascion. This refers to the prayers of the diviner. This is not an ordinary prayer for this is to be recited during the concluding part of the ritual. The text of this prayer is in Latin.

Padugo. This ritual required a pig offering either wild or a domesticated and usually, the color of the animal should be white to symbolize purity of the spirit. If pig/boar is not available to white chicken will be a substitute for the ritual to be conducted.
**Spirit Medium.** This refers to the diviner/shaman or the specialist of the sacred prayer (orascion) being commissioned by the “guardian angel” during the ritual activity or process of the ritual. The message of the “guardian angel” is being revealed by the diviner.

**Sponsor.** The one who requested that the Padugo or Palina ritual which will be instituted.

**Tolomanon.** This is the sacred vow of the diviner. Of which he piously instituted or practiced.

**X. DISCUSSION**

**MANNER OF INSTITUTION OF PALINA RITUAL**

The description below spelled out the construct of the ethnographic description of "Palina" ritual in Tag-anongan Island.

**BEFORE THE RITUAL PROPER**

The “Palina” ritual was instituted to invoke blessings for a new pump boat (fishing vessel) to be used either in nearshore fishing or deep sea fishing. A night before the institution of the ritual the diviner/healer/shaman will have his sacred prayer (orascion) to St. Peter believed to be the patron of the fishermen. His sacred prayers or "oracion" was in Latin some were taken from the prayer book others he barely recited and chanted. In the evening prayer, before the ritual, he will instruct his wife or his son to light seven (7) candles in front of the altar with amulets/charms (anting - anting) and image of St. Peter patron of the fishermen. The prayers below were recited as a prelude for the “Palina” to be conducted in the following morning:

"Senyur, San Pedr, patron sa mga mangingsida ania ang imong sologoon naga tuman sa tahas sa misyun.

Bendisyuni ang pagahimoon kong ritwal ogma. Inubanan ning kandila timaan sa akong pagsalig.

Senyur San Pedro, uban sa Kahayag na simbolong ning pito ka kandila panalaginan mo si:

__________________________________________ og iyang mga intinsiyun nga mahimo produktibo ang iyang pump boat nga daghan unta ang iyang makuha nga grasya sa dagat.

Ako magaawit kanimo ning orascion sa mangingsida. Human sa awit ang mga butay ita-

as na timaan sa pagpangayo og bidisyon kang sinyur San Pedro. Human sa Pagawit sa Orascion , ang Habak (anting anting) sa may kiaadman iyang ibakus.

Nga timaan sa mga panalagin nga iyang nadaw-at kang Senyur San Pedro.

**TRANSLATION**

"St. Peter here is your servant performing the sacred "orascion" of the diviner. Bless the Palina ritual to be conducted tomorrow morning. With this seven (7) candles which symbolized my faith. This seven (7) candles which also symbolize light. Please __________________________________________bless his/her intentions form making his/her pump boat
productive in fish catch and harvest. I am chanting with you now the prayer of "orascion". After the chant, the young coconut leaves and amulet (habak) will be raised as a symbol that the diviner is seeking assistance from St. Peter.”

THE RITUAL PROPER

The ritual proper starts early in the morning. Usually, the host or the one requesting for the ritual to be instituted provided the offering to the diviner. This excluding the chicken to be used in the ritual, this include in kind or cash. In this terrain, it can be deduced that the ritual has an economic component that is providing an indirect payment to the diviner for his services. After receiving the gifts or stipend the ritual will commence. First, the diviner will have his" pamatbat/panawagtagawag "or opening prayer holding the coconut leaves (butay) and utters this supplication:

"Sr. San Pedro Patron sa Kadagatan og namong mangingisda tagai ako kinaadman kay gi tuman ko sa kinasingksing gayud ang akong tolumanon aron nako mahimo ning ritwa sa Palina. Kining mga butay timaan sa imong kahalangdon og paghigugma kanamo imong gitudlo na may may kiaadman". Tagae kog angel magbalantay namagauban kanako ning ritual sa Palina.

Akong gihangyu ang nagpasiuona o sponsor sa ritual na andamon ang manok para sa ritwal"

TRANSLATION

"St. Peter patron of the high seas and the fishermen please give me wisdom hence I have completed my vow in order to perform this ritual. This young coconut leaves symbolizes your sacredness and choosing us me as your servant. Please give me a guardian angel to accompany in this ritual. I am asking the sponsor of this ritual to prepare the chicken for the ritual".

In this part, the chicken will be offered by the diviner to the deity. Before it will be cut, he will have again his supplication or his orascion in Latin. After the supplication, he will now get the young coconut leaves and encircle the altar twelve times before cutting the neck of the chicken to symbolize the twelve apostles of Christ after he encircled the altar he will now cut the neck of the chicken. The blood of the chicken will be put in a coconut shell (loho) the blood will be used in the blessing rite/ritual in the new boat. As the diviner stated:

“Ning Dugo timaan sa kinabuhi og pagluwas namong makakasala. I iway kining maong pump boat sa mga unos, bagyu og tunglo sa Kaaway sama sa mga hangin itum nga nagdala og dimalas as pangisda”. Ning dugo sa mananap (manok) timaan sa pagdayig namo kanimo Senyur Jesus Nazareno og Senyur San Pedro”. Nga Simbolo sa inyung kaayu og pag kamaalamon".
Karun atong awiton ang Amahan namo og Ang Kordero sa Dios”. Og Pagkatapos atong isaolo ang nagatoo ako”.

TRANSLATION
“This blood of the animal (chicken) which symbolizes of saving us from sins. Please make this pump boat safe from the cursed of the enemy which brought storms, big waves and bad luck in fishing. The blood of the animal (chicken) is a symbol of praise to you” Jesus” the Nazarene and St. Peter you have symbolizes kindness and wisdom. Now let’s sing the “Our Father”, Lamb of God and we will recite the apostle’s creed.”

The Blessing Proper of the New Pump Boat
The diviner will call his assistant usually his wife to bring the blood of the chicken in the coconut shell (loho) and he will have to bless the boat marking the sign of the cross using the blood of the chicken in seven (7) points or areas of the boat. Below is his supplication:

“Mahal na Senyur San Pedro Patron sa kadagagatan bendisyuni Kining pump boat ni: ___________________________ imong pagabidisyunan, panalipdan sa mga unos sa dagat, mahalikay sa dagkong bawod og bagyu og uban pangkatalagman”.

TRANSLATION
"St Pater , patron of high seas, kindly bless this pump boat owed by: ___________________________. May you protect it from big waves, typhoons and other calamities “?

The diviner will have his sacred dance using red and white handkerchiefs weaving and praising Jesus of Nazarene by chanting the Nazarene prayer. After the dance of the diviner, the sponsor or the one who requested for the ritual will utter words of thanks to the diviner for the job he had done. Then, followed by the "orascion", chant of the diviner as a proof that the service had been concluded. After which he will announce that the ritual has ended. After the announcement, the prepared food will be served and the community or spectators will eat or dine in the prepared food.

THE THEMES OF THE SAID RITUALS
The themes illustrated in the "Palina" fishing ritual were: respect and sustainable use of the environment, respect for the indigenous knowledge system, close family ties, the relevance of spirituality, respect for elders, and form of indigenous economics since there is a meager payment to the diviner for the services he had provided.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY IN DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS MATERIALS FOR LITERATURE AND HUMANITIES CLASSES
The richness of the motif of "Palina" ritual such: mysticism, profound spirituality, love for the environment, respect for traditions, and closeness of clan and village are good terrain to be included as themes of the lessons to be developed in humanities classes for it reinforce good and desirable values.

**IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY TO VALUES FORMATION**

The "Palina" fishing ritual is very rich in the following values: respect for elders, rich in spirituality, respect of biodiversity, sustainable use of resources and close clan relation.

**IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY IN THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

The ritual portrayed for the need of sustainable use of sea resources. The need to maintain the balance of the ecology in respect of man's view of it as useful or a form of utility and his desire to have a sustainable use of it for the next generation.

**IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

Folk religious tourism is vastly growing in the Philippines in the likes of "Pagpapagako sa Krus" in Pampanga similarly it can be instituted by promoting the "Palina" ritual as a community-based tourism attraction.

**XI. CONCLUSIONS**

The Palina rituals have the following functions such:

A. It is a form quasi-religious activity though classified as a form of “Folk Christianity”. Due to the Christian influences like the use of young coconut leaves is influenced by a “Palm Sunday "celebration in Christina tradition. Likewise, the use of candle is of Christian influence, including the prayers used in the ritual.

B. The role of the diviner is both a shaman and keepers of tradition or cultural master;

C. The "Palina" ritual is rich in themes such: respect for the environment in looking in it as a utility (its usefulness) and sacred but promoting also its responsible use;

D. The "Palina" ritual is a form also of availing the services of the diviner. Which he receives a quasi-payment in his services which is an expression again of quasi-economic activity?

E. Its themes can be integrated into classes in humanities and literature due to the desired values it portrayed;

F. The "Palina" ritual is a form of thanksgiving, merrymaking and indigenous manner of spiritual exercise.

**XII. RECOMMENDATION**

The following development measures are offered as recommendations:
A. Integration of the "Palina" chants, "orascion" in literature classes for its preservation and for posterity as part of the Filipino cultural heritage;

B. Religious Tourism can be promoted in the celebration of the said ritual;

C. Environmental Planning must include the themes the ritual enshrined like the sustainable use of resources and environmentally friendly fishing material or implements.

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