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Preface

Kinship, coincidences and the desire to do ‘anthropology at home’ triggered our interest and involvement in the Tasaday hoax and subsequent study on the T’boli. In August 1986 Duhaylungsod attended the International Conference on the Tasaday Controversy and other Urgent Anthropological Issues at the University of the Philippines at Diliman, which was the first professional examination of the controversy. She was then pursuing her Ph.D. from the University of Queensland in Australia and was back in the Philippines for fieldwork at the time the conference was held. During the conference, a group of T’boli from Maitum was presented as witnesses for the hoax side, some of whom are known to the Duhaylungsod family. Duhaylungsod’s family through marriage has been residing in Maitum for more than two decades on account of the family’s work with a Protestant mission group. The Maitum community has long dismissed the Tasaday as an Elizalde creation, which accounts for Duhaylungsod’s disinterest in the issue from the time it broke the headlines in the seventies. In the course of exchanging pleasantries and discussion with the group, Duhaylungsod was able to arrange a T’boli-accompanied trip to the caves a week after the conference. Unfortunately, she got sick that week, shortly afterwards militarization of the caves region ensued as a result of the escalation of the controversy.

Hyndman’s Asia-Pacific experience was as a Melanesianist before his first visit to the Philippines in 1986 in his capacity as Ph.D. supervisor for Duhaylungsod’s fieldwork in Patahan, an upland village in Laguna and for another Filipino student’s Ph.D. fieldwork in Cabatuan, a Buhi lakeside village in Bicol. They have now completed their degrees and both are based at the University of the Philippines at Los Banos. Hyndman started working with indigenous peoples political movements in the Philippines and returned regularly to the Cordillera.

It was the opportunity to present the growing controversy surrounding the Tasaday hoax to the Fifth Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies held in Darwin, Australia in August 1988 that led us to start this ethnography. We made seven research visits to South Cotabato between 1989-1992 and we are the only academic anthropologists to independently conduct fieldwork with the T’boli since the emergence of the Tasaday controversy. In addition to our publications, we have presented papers and panels to the Fifth Conference on Hunting and Gathering Peoples held in Darwin in August-September 1988, the Mindanao Conference held at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra in November 1989, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) annual meeting of November 1989 and the 4th International Philippines Studies Conference held at ANU in July 1992.