

# Living Beyond Modernity: Rethinking Progress through the Baduy Way of Life

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## Abstract

In an era where technological advancement and economic growth are widely treated as universal measures of progress, the continued existence of the Baduy community challenges dominant assumptions about what it means for a society to develop. Widely recognized for maintaining strict customary restrictions on technology, transportation, and external influence, the Baduy community is often perceived as isolated or resistant to modernity. However, beyond these assumptions lies a cultural worldview rooted in simplicity, collective responsibility, balance, and the preservation of ancestral values. Rather than interpreting the Baduy way of life as merely a rejection of modernity, this paper argues that it reflects an alternative conception of progress that prioritizes social harmony, cultural continuity, and sustainability over material expansion and technological acceleration. Drawing on a critical review of anthropological literature and indigenous studies, this paper serves as a preliminary conceptual inquiry toward future ethnographic research on the relationship between tradition, development, and indigenous knowledge systems. The discussion also acknowledges the social, economic, and political pressures faced by indigenous communities within contemporary society, while avoiding the romanticization of traditional life. By situating the Baduy community within broader debates on modernity, development, and alternative ways of living, this paper ultimately invites a reconsideration of how progress and human flourishing are defined in an increasingly modernized world.

**Keywords:** Ancestral Values; Cultural Continuity; Indigenous Knowledge; Social Harmony; Sustainability