

ARTICLES

Humanity in Philippine Epics

In their recently concluded meeting, the Association of Philippine Colleges of Arts and Sciences (APCAS), endorsed the program of the Ministry of Education Culture and Sports (MECS) for the education of our youth in values. Among these values were human dignity, the equality of man in the sight of God, responsibility of man for his acts, and respect for the rights of the human person. These values are human values because they subserve especially man's spirit which distinguishes and separates the human being from the brute animal. Needless to say, these values are also the roots that found human freedom and the political institution that best preserves and fosters freedom — namely democracy.

The sorry decades just past are witness that human freedom can be degraded and suppressed. Having toppled the tyrant in the cheapest revolution ever, it is the task of responsible and mature citizens to go over our past culture, in whole or in part, to reflect on it, and to read therein the signs and symbols of the growth of freedom for the deeper grounding of our people, especially the young, in democracy.

I propose in this paper to go over some of our published folk epics and to discover in them tell-tale evidence, if not strong and unmistakable ones, of human values.

How Humanity Is Understood in this Paper—We understand “humanity” as: (1) the fact or quality of being human; whereby man differs from the beast; (2) the fact or quality of being humane, as kind feelings and dispositions and sympathies of man; kindness and benevolence; (3) in the plural, by “humanities”, we mean the course of studies which are meant to foster the qualities properly human like courage, integrity, self esteem and confidence, etc. The paper understands humanity in the first and second meanings.

Methodology—In our discussion we shall first present the four human values mentioned in the MECS program of value education, and then go over five of our epics and see how these were verified in them. In the last part of the paper instances of human feelings will also be pointed out from the five epics surveyed.

1. HUMAN DIGNITY

By this phrase we mean the moral worth of a man inherent in his being a human person, and the right on his part to be respected, and the duty of others to do so. We can survey this trait by adducing either negative or positive incidents from the epics. By negative incidents I mean instances where the worth of a person is highlighted by indirection, that is, through the punishment of one who disregards this dignity. Positive incidents, on the other hand, are instances wherein the person's worth and value are recognized and respected.

Negative Instance—Our first instance is taken from the epic *Lam-ang* when the hero encountered his rival, Sumarang. This gentleman was returning from Calanutian, having failed to gain the attention of Doña Ines Cannoyan. When Sumarang found out that Lam-ang was also going there, he dissuaded him, telling him that Lam-ang would certainly not be entertained by Ines. And when Lam-ang insisted on going there just the same, Sumarang tried to spear him. After Lam-ang had inquired from his friend Sumarang where he had been, Sumarang tells him:

I came from the North
From the town of Calanutian
To try my luck

With Doña Ines Cannoyan.
(*Lam-ang*, 605-09)

To which Lam-ang answered:

If that is where you came
I have the same intention,
My friend Sumarang.
(*Lam-ang*, 611-13)

In return Sumarang counsels Lam-ang:

Ay my friend Lam-ang
You had better not continue.
(*Lam-ang*, 615-16)

Why? It is clear that he despises Lam-ang:

For who are you
That you will be loved
By Doña Ines Cannoyan?
Many are rich
Even Spanish gentlemen
Yet they were not even looked at
By Doña Ines Cannoyan
So my friend Lam-ang
You had better not go on.
(*Lam-ang*, 617-25)

But Lam-ang insists on his intention to go there:

Ay my friend Sumarang
Let us part
For I am trying my luck
In the town of Calanutian
Perhaps I'll be loved
By Doña Ines Cannoyan.
(*Lam-ang*, 628-32)

Sumarang hated him for this. He had not been successful. He would not allow anyone else to succeed. He told our hero:

This will be your end.
My poisoned weapon

Is coming and you should be ready
This weapon I am holding
You won't see and can't avoid.
(*Lam-ang*, 634-38)

And Lam-ang dared him:

You will have your wish...
I am here and ready.
(*Lam-ang*, 640-42)

Lam-ang caught the spear, held it between his thumb and small fingers and turned it nine times around his back and neck. Sarcastically he told Sumarang:

I give you back your spear
For I do not want debts.
For it is warm from use
While my spear is cold
For want of use.
(*Lam-ang*, 657-61)

Then Lam-ang called upon the sea wind. At the same time he let loose his spear. Through nine hills was Sumarang carried. Blown by the spear. And Lam-ang's final words were:

That is what happens
To characters that bad.
(*Lam-ang*, 677-79)

Here clearly is punishment for Sumarang who did not honor the dignity of a fellow human being, Lam-ang. Both of them were after the hand of Doña Ines Cannoyan. He should have respected the rights of another suitor to lay his claims before the lady. The evil end by which he was punished clearly shows that the epic tradition lays much store of respect for human dignity.

Positive Incidents—Through the offices of the two pets that Lam-ang had brought along, the hairy dog and the white rooster with yellow legs, the attention of Doña Ines was arrested. For when Lam-ang put down his white rooster, it flapped its wings and an outhouse in front of Ines' house fell. This obliged Doña

Ines to look out the window. Then the hairy dog barked and "it made the old new. And made something out of nothing" in other words, the house was restored to its original state. (*Lam-ang*, 749-59). So the mother of Ines enjoined the girl to deck herself out in her fineries and to go down and bring the visitor personally into their house. (*Lam-ang*, 762-68).

Once Lam-ang had entered the house, he was very well treated by Doña Ines. She requested her father to bring out the chair of pure gold wrought by the northerners. And Lam-ang must have been invited to sit on it. Then Ines requested her mother to pour water on the magic pot... Because we must prepare the food of *caca*, the man Don Lam-ang, (*Lam-ang*, 789-811).

Again Ines requested her father to catch the castrated cock that was intended for Lam-ang's visit. Then while at table at luncheon time both Ines and Lam-ang shared the same rice plate, the same fish dish and the same bowl of soup. (*Lam-ang*, 813-25).

After the meal the mother, Unnayan of Ines, prepared the betel chew for Lam-ang. She picked the heart shaped leaves from the vine, the areca nut and the best tobacco leaves grown in eastern Cagayan. It was only after all these preliminaries that the parents of Ines inquired from Lam-ang the purpose of his coming. But Lam-ang was spared the need to answer. For the white yellow legged rooster spoke up:

Apo, with your permission

We came to pay court to your daughter Cannoyan.

(*Lam-ang*, 826-59).

Then followed the settlement of the bride-price. Before the wedding, Lam-ang had to return to Nalbuan to inform his parents of the success of his suit, and to bring the needed provisions and paraphernalia for the wedding. He had disclosed to Ines that he would fire a salvo from the shore to signal his return. When he did this, the parents and townpeople of Cannoyan were on hand to greet Lam-ang and his party. Cannoyan brought along with her enough clothes for the guests to change. And the clothes would be theirs for the keeping. The wedding took place next day. Ines was dressed in the fineries brought by Lam-ang's peo-

ple. They were married in church amid the pealing of bells. After Mass a salvo was fired at every step taken by the bride. Then followed dancing the *fandanggo* and the marriage feast. (Lam-ang, 873-1171). Unnayan told the guests:

Listen to what I have to say
Your plates are yours
You can wrap them and bring them home.
(*Lam-ang*, 1163-66)

The incident that followed is between Unnayan, the bride's mother, and Namongan, the groom's mother. Both request each other to tell of the habits of their respective child. Again done in a spirit of good will and fun.

Throughout the epic we cannot but be impressed by the sense of human dignity and the respect that it requires from all concerned. The hero Lam-ang respected his wife and her parents; so did Doña Ines respect her husband and the parents of her husband. This respect is also extended to the old diver, Marcos, who retrieved the bones of Lam-ang which the shark had excreted. Lam-ang *redivivus* said to his wife:

We should reward
This old skilled man
Load him with money
My wife Cannoyan.
(*Lam-ang*, 1457-60)

Lam-ang too is aware of his debt of gratitude to his pets:

We should love
The yellow-legged hen
Also the rooster
And the hairy dog
Because if not for them
I would be lost forever.
(*Lam-ang*, 1461-66)

And finally Lam-ang speaks the words that characterize the very basis of their human dignity: the love they bore for each other as husband and wife:

And it is but right
That we should love each other
Beloved Cannoyan,
So that we will live happily
For this is our goal
In this vale of tears (*dito'y daga a pagluluwaan*).
(*Lam-ang*, 1467-72)

I-A. RESPECT FOR ELDERS

This respect is an integral part of respect for the dignity of man. Even as husband and wife because of the love they have for each other respect each other; so also the children because of the love they owe their parents for the gift of life, tutelage and protection do also respect them. And this love for parents spills over to respect for other elder persons, although not necessarily one's own parents.

In the epic *Aliguyon*, while the hero was fighting with his enemy, Pumbakhayon, in the ricefields of Daligdigan, Dangunay, the mother of Pumbakhayon, carrying the child Bugar on her back, raised a double-bladed bolo to attract the attention of both combatants. Then she shouted to them:

You two men, what do you get from fighting in the field?
You are of equal strength in the field!
What is the use?
(*Aliguyon*, 340-42)

Aliguyon looked up at Dangunay, wife of Pangaiwan. He saw how motherly Dangunay was. Then Aliguyon paused and spoke to his foe: inquiring who the lady was and the baby she carried on her back. Pumbakhayon told him that the lady was his own mother Dangunay, and the baby his younger sister, Bugar. (*Aliguyon*, 343-52). Next we note the humanity of Aliguyon's reaction. Clear token of his respect for the dignity of the woman:

Is not my own mother Dumulao like her?
(*Aliguyon*, 350)

Dangunay appealed to the hero saying:

Aliguyon, go to your camp, for Pumbakhayon must go to eat. (*Aliguyon*, 351-52). Similarly after Aliguyon had returned to Hannanga and Pumbakhayon had followed with his comrades, and both rivals were once again fighting it out amid the yellowing rice-fields of Hannanga, Dumulao, the mother of Aliguyon, with her baby on her back climbed to the terrace to overlook the fight. Like Dangunay in Daligdigan, she also saw that:

Neither seemed the better of the other
Aliguyon nor Pumbakhayon.
Their forms were clouds of dust on the embankment.
Dumulao shouted, "For what reason
Do you fight on the terraces, children, everyday?
Say, Pumbakhayon, go up the terraces to the granary yard,
So that Aliguyon can do the same and go to eat."
(*Aliguyon*, 473-79)

Pumbakhayon looked up and saw the lady and the baby. Then he paused and asked Aliguyon who they were. Aliguyon confessed: the lady was Dumulao, his mother, and the baby child, his younger sister, Aginaya. (*Aliguyon*, 480-88)

Then as in the case of Aliguyon in Daligdigan, Pumbakhayon in Hannanga land thought:

Is not my mother Dangunay just like her?
(*Aliguyon*, 489)

And Pumbakhayon respecting her, leaped to the granary yard, Aliguyon followed; put down his shield and went up the house in order to eat. Then he chewed.

I-B. ADMIRING GOOD QUALITIES EVEN OF FOES

This quality is again an integral part of the respect for human dignity. And it is sufficiently verified in our epic traditions. During their first encounter, Aliguyon carefully took measure of Pumbakhayon. He observed his toes and said:

Is not Pumbakhayon handsome?

Pumbakhayon is trying to straighten his deformed toes
It is useless to fight Pumbakhayon, I think.

If we should fight would we be of equal strength? (*Aliguyon*, 287-93) A quite normal reaction of a fighter to an opponent whose strength and prowess he has not yet tested. On the other hand, during their first exchange of spear shots, Pumbakhayon saw Aliguyon's feet and said:

How wonderfully Aliguyon shows his skill.
Son of Amtalao.
(*Aliguyon*, 296)

Afterwards when the women came to watch the fight and cried out to cheer him:

Fight, fight, Pumbakhayon, kill Aliguyon
Bring his head to us, that it may have fresh air
at the door of our house!

Pumbakhayon answered:

Soften your cries lovely ladies
For worthy as an opponent is Aliguyon.
He is as good as I.
(*Aliguyon*, 314-20)

In the epic *Labaw Donggon*, Saragnayan, the rival of the hero, paid tribute to him in Saragnayan's last meeting with his wife. Referring to Labaw Donggon he said:

A fighter of the first degree is he
Odoyyyyyyyyyy
In all the world
Never leaving a leaf unturned
Forgiving no man a harm
Mighty too are his children...
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1887-91)

In his earlier encounter with Labaw Donggon, before he over-powered him and imprisoned him beneath his kitchen, Saragnayan had admired the warrior qualities of his foe.

Agyu and his companions admired the dignified datu who was the leader of the warriors who fought with him in his encounters with the enemy after his dream foretelling the visitation that the Suguy, or Almighty God, was to make upon Agyu and his people. Actually the strange but dignified datu was no other than "Gulubatnon Nan Labi, Lagunga Nanghimaug, father of the brave men of Yandang. He wore the mask, he put on the guise of Gumugunal, god of death, Gumumba of the place of death... because he missed them so. Because of his extreme loneliness." (*Agyu*, 2525-52). We shall have occasion to touch on this scene again below. The epic gives a laudatory description of the enemy leader. He was:

As big as a tree surrounded with vines
Like a sizzling fire
Around his chest a string of charms
Carrying a bag of spells
When they encountered him
When they had met him.
This was what he uttered
This was what he had said:
'Don't be surprised
Don't be amazed
For I am the leader
I am the head!
(*Agyu*, 2317-30)

But Agyu and his men were surprised that the leader came unarmed!

But it was a great wonder...
For he had no spear
Nor did he carry a shield
Nor had he a buckler
Not even a bolo
Not even a knife.
Now you could perceive
You could very well see
There you would notice

There you would mark
The strong forged body
The very tempered body.
(*Agyu*, 2331-43)

Although the admirable description was not spoken by *Agyu* but by the narrator, we can see that even the hero was not left unimpressed by his opponent. It was actually *Imbalana hu langit*, son of *Tagyakuwa ta Dalag* and *Banlak* in the *Olagingon*, and nephew of *Agyu*, who sized up the situation and suggested to his uncle to give way to him so that he could handle the opponent.

For I discern
That you cannot make it
Of that dignified datu there
That lordly chief.
(*Agyu*, 2361-65)

Then the lordly chief suggested that he shake hands with his opponent.

And while they shook hands the thunder roared.
They held fast
They clung to each other
It was very fearful for the earth where we suffer
And toil was slowly cracking.
Many holes were forming, and the mountains were caving in.
And the seven-layered sky was coming down
It was now turning around
Like the grinder
At highest part of heaven
The last portion of the sky.
(*Agyu*, 2366-92)

This episode led to the intervention of *Lagungun Lagabaen*, grandfather of *Agyu*, at the instance of his wife, who pacifies the relatives who fight incognito in the *Olaging*. From the heights of heaven he looked down upon the earth and saw *Yandang* enveloped in darkness. He commanded the darkness to be gone. When it was dissipated he saw the fighting datus, the battling

braves. So carrying his bronze whip he went straight to the magic room of Agyu Man Dig Dagatun to inquire for the cause of the fight. Agyu informed him:

It began with the exchanging of betel chew
Between Tabagka Wad Pintuan and the diwata
Who holds the earth, Tumpas ha Manapiraw.
When it was finished
The enemies arrived.
(*Agyu*, 2397-2489)

The ancestral referee then approached the fighting men, hit them on the head with the bronze whip and both dropped to the ground unconscious. Afterwards Agyu requested Lagabaan to bring them back to life. Which he did.

It became clear afterwards that the lordly chief with whom Imbalana had fought was no other than Gulubatnum Man Labi, Lagunga Nanghinaug his grandfather, who had asked Gumugunal Gumumba, keeper of the dead, to disguise him so that he could visit his kin at Yandang. And the reason: he felt extreme loneliness and desire to see them. So in the end Agyu said to Lagunga:

My beloved father
Let us go up to the fortress
And forget the loneliness
And banish sadness.
(*Agyu*, 2500-52)

Comments — From the above discussion it is quite clear that our epics abound in examples of respect for human dignity which is also exemplified in respect for parents and elders as well as in the capacity to admire the good qualities even of one's enemies.

II. EQUALITY BEFORE GOD

Part of the religious heritage of mankind is the conviction that God is the Father and that all men are his children. God or the Transcendent is impartial to the looks and likes of persons. He is also on the side of the truth, justice and right. As

a matter of fact, he is the champion of the downtrodden, the orphan and the widow, the "little people," the voiceless who are weak in their physical make-up as well as in political and legal power.

God's availability to man in prayer is an instance of his fatherly concern for them. In our epics, prayers are directed to the Almighty Father, as well as to the diwata or guardian spirits of the various *dramatis personae*. Whether the prayer is directed to God directly or to the spirits does not really matter. What is crucial is the fact that man prays. For thereby he acknowledges that he is bound to some power beyond, upon whom he depends. In these prayers, too, we shall notice that some are addressed to the voice of the epic singer, or to the rooster or to the *idao* bird. It should be noted that the voice which is connected with the breath and the animals are all linked with spirits, at least, in animistic or cosmic faith. And as such are also closely related to mankind.

In this section we shall consider, first of all the prayers which are directed to Almighty God which will include the invocations at the beginning of the epics, then the prayers addressed to the diwata or guardian spirits of the hero or the anti-hero, and third, the prayers addressed to the rooster and the *idao*.

II. A. PRAYERS ADDRESSED TO ALMIGHTY GOD

a. *Invocation at the Beginning of the Epic*

Not all of our extant and recorded Philippine epics begin with an invocation. For instance, of the five epics found in the *Anthology of Asean Literatures-Epics of the Philippines*, only two are provided with invocations: *Lam-ang* and *Agyu*.

The invocation in *Lam-ang* is addressed to the Holy Spirit and as such seems to have undergone Christian cultural influence. But the presence of invocations in other epics from Mindanao seems to suggest that the invocation at the start of chanting the epic may be an indigenous phenomenon. The invocation of *Lam-ang* reads thus:

O glorious God, the Holy Spirit
 Enlighten my mind, Apo,
 So that I can faithfully relate
 The story of a man.

The last line even seems to recall Virgil's initial line in the *Aeneid*: ... *virumque cano* (I sing of the man, the hero).

In the epic *Agyu* as found in the *Epics of the Philippines*, there is also an invocation (*pamahra* for the Livunganen-Arumannen Manobo; *pamara* for the Bukidnon). I shall first comment on the *pamahra* in the *Epics of the Philippines* text of *Agyu*, and then also bring in the *pamara* in the *Olagin*, "The Battle of Nalandangan" as found in *Kinaadman*, Vol. I (1979), 156-59.

1. *Pamahra* (Manobo)

The chanter first of all addresses his own voice which he sends to the realm of the immortals. Next he addresses *Diwata* or *Suguy* (i.e., God Almighty) who guides his voice as he sings the *Ulahingan*. Then the chanter offers his singing to him who "lives eternally and who gives wise guidance."

The chanter continues with an apology to *Diwata*, professing his reverence and admiration for the god's leading the deep desires of his mind. He requests *Diwata* to light a torch, as it were, as he begins to sing, so that he will not go astray.

Then he addresses the lesser *diwata* or *suguy* who watches over the building in which he is singing. The chanter regards this lesser *diwata* as a leader, a friend, even a brother, and requests him not to put a hindrance to the voice he raises. For he could be lost like a bird on the wide shore or the vast ocean.

2. *Pamara* (Bukidnon)

The chanter drives away fatigue and invites tranquility to enter his mind. For very seldom does he act like a naughty child, making noise in order to attract attention. He admits that he is full of loneliness and that he is looking for entertainment in order to forget the loneliness that is housed in his mind.

Next he invites his voice to become golden, and never to mind the fact that people may despise it. He also counsels his voice to fly up to heaven, the circular sky with stars, the place of Tinampod, the half man. He is the watcher of singers. So that even if he is sleepy, he will wake up and reach out for his betel nut chew and, while munching, will look down from his abode in heaven upon the great *tulugan* (the long house.) Tinampod will know that the *tulugan* will be veiled with black clouds. But there will be a talisman for the place reached by the voice (rather unclear). For some people may lay hands on us, upon hearing my voice.

Next the chanter who evidently is not a *baylan* or shaman, says that it is very difficult because we do not have a *baylan* around. So that there will be no one who can apply poultice to the sick. And he tells us that he repeatedly asked Dayungba, the ship, to guide him as he goes up the mountain. (Chanter seems to be referring to the journey a soul must make after death, according to Bukidnon belief, when it must go up the mountain Balatukan to Panigbasa, where the soul cuts a mark on the bark of the tree of life, on its way to Gomugunal's place, the keeper of the dead). The chanter continues: We are born in the east and we are bound to go to the west — i.e., old age and death.

During the chanting of the *Agyu*, spirits are said to eavesdrop. Their presence must be acknowledged, otherwise the listeners will fall asleep. If in the middle of the night an eager listener suffers headache, it will be hard because there is no *baylan* (shaman) around. He ends with another address to Dayungba, to guide him in his journey, to light his way like a torch as he tells a disorderly story. And finally he addresses the eaves-dropping spirits, inviting them to enter and come nearer to the story in his mind which he wants to tell.

Comments — Both invocations presuppose belief in an Almighty God (*Diwata* or *Suguy*) or at least Tinampod, the guardian of epic singers, who lives in the circular heaven (the sixth level in the Bukidnon gradated heaven, just below the seventh which is where Magbabaya lives (the Almighty God)).

The Manobo *pamahra* believes also in lesser *diwatas* or *sugays* who watch the house where the singing takes place. There is a feeling of friendship and close affection between the singer and these spirits. In the Bukidnon *pamara*, we also witness belief in other spirits who "eavesdrop during the singing." But there is lacking the love and affection that seems to obtain between the chanter and the lesser *diwatas* among the Manobo. However, it is interesting that the Bukidnon *pamara* brings in allusions to the death journey that a soul must make up the mountain in order to make the notch on the tree of life. The chanter appears to be reminded of this as he counsels his voice to go up to heaven. Fatalistically he states that we are born and birth is the beginning of a long journey to old age and death. He personified the ship of death, calling it Dayungba, and addresses it to guide his voice and to serve as a torch to it.

The chanter's decrying the absence of a *baylan* or shaman and the mention of the ship of death which one must ride up the mountain to Panigbasa in order to make the mark on the tree of life, the mention, too, of the journey of life from birth to old age and death—all these seem to re-echo the shamanic origins of the epic. These elements seem to be unmistakable vestiges of shamanic beliefs and practices. The shaman after all is the psychopomp (the conveyor of souls to the land of the dead) in many ancient traditions. (Eliade, *Shamanism*, pp. 4, 182, 205ff, 208f. and *passim*).

b. *Prayers Addressed to God Almighty.*

In the epic *Taake* after the death of his close friend and companion, Tomitib Manaon, the hero's wife, the lady of Pintawan, tries to revive her husband's friend. She made seven betel chews and she put these all on the body of Tomitib, then covered them with her *monsala*, and she prayed:

I pray, I entreat our almighty Father
and lord, and mother's power: let epaq wake up,
my brother-in-law. Let him get up, long has he
slept, long has he rested.
(*Taake*, 6200-08)

Slowly Tomitib moved, and turned to his side, but he was not alive. He did not get up.

Thus, the lady of Pintawan admitted: "I lack power." And turning to her sister, the lady of Pintoqan, she said: "You raise him, you awaken him." Then she suggested that both of them go out for a walk. (*Taake*, 6174-6220)

The two ladies then betook themselves to the *tonawan* or *tonogan*, the melting pot. From this melting pot, a dead man's soul has to be flushed out if he is to live again. Taake's wife counseled her sister to look carefully at the *tonawan*, for "this Tomitib Manaon still runs after people." At this, the sister asked: "What shall we do?"

They went around the *tonawan*. With a kerchief they tried to catch the soul of Tomitib. But they could not. For in the *tonogan* Tomitib Manaon was waving his shield and brandishing his *karisan*. From early morning they fished him and were not successful until high noon. It was the lady of Pintoqan who caught it finally. Then she ran to Malopanyag (*Taake*). (*Taake*, 6228-68). Then the lady prayed:

I pray, I entreat the Almighty Father
To grant me power.
My mother's power
Be also my power.
(*Taake*, 6269-73)

Then she let loose the soul of Tomitib. And he slowly awoke. They urged him to get up and he did. They asked him what he would like to take. He replied: "I like to drink water from heaven." (*Taake*, 6287-88).

The lady of Pintoqan, his savior, only smiled. Then she took her hunting knife and ran it across her palm. And blood flowed out like golden water. She caught it in a vessel. She gave it to Tomitib to drink. She then turned Tomitib around until he perspired blood. She asked Tomitib if he would accept a chew from her. He looked up slowly and met Malopanyag's eyes. He smiled and laughed: "If you give me a chew, *tebon*, why should I not chew it?" (*Taake*, 6300-27)

Finally they exchanged rings on their fingers. Tomitib became more handsome. He smiled and laughed again. In this condition he felt he had eaten and breakfasted and his sadness disappeared. Malopanyag counseled his belaq and his wife to go home at the end of the week. But the wife wanted to witness the battle. Tomitib Manaon then became invisible. (*Taake*, 6340-75).

In the epic *Agyu*, the hero after rescuing his sister, Tabagka, brought her back to the fortress and advised her to take a rest. But he returned to the fray. He did havoc to the foe, with the help of his lance and dagger which fought independently by themselves. Finally, Agyu came face to face with the leader of the enemy, Pinagtibolos Lona, Pinalintad Pamaloy. The enemy leader addressed Agyu:

I have been away
For a long time;
I have left since many planting seasons.
I have not returned,
I have not gone home;
Because of this,
I long for brotherhood;
For this reason
I seek friendship.
(*Agyu*, 3829-40)

But because of an old feud between the two peoples they represented, Agyu refused the offer of friendship and brotherhood saying:

But what you wish
Cannot be granted;
For it is to be recalled
The people of Bagyowan
Have a feud with Baganalan;
The fortress of Sagilan
With the fortress of Yandang.
(*Agyu*, 3849-58)

The hero invited Pinagtibolos Lona to a duel, both of them using their daggers in a single fight. In the subsequent encounter the enemy leader was overcome, being minced on the shore. After his victory, however, Agyu himself became breathless and soon fell dead. (*Agyu*, 3890-3906).

Meanwhile the shield of Agyu kept vigil over his dead body. Then it lifted the remains of Dig Dagatan until it reached the heavens where lived the ancestor Legabaan ko Langit. When Legabaan saw the dead body of Agyu, he prayed to Suguy, the Almighty Father:

Great Protector
I request thee
To help me:
Grant me the power
To bring to life,
Put breath into
Dalomanon Mayungba
Dayoon Dig Dagaton.
(*Agyu*, 3932-40)

And Agyu was brought back to life. And in a very short time, a decision was made to settle the fratricidal wars. For the Manobo believe that they and the Maranaw, the Maguindanao and the Bukidnon have descended from one and the same parents. Legabaan declared that they should live in harmony:

For there is strength in unity.
For no one is a stranger among them.
All of them brothers,
All of them kinsmen.
(*Agyu*, 3958-68)

Comments — First of all, the sudden death of Agyu after he had refused the offer of reconciliation from the foe, and after defeating him in a single combat with only the use of their daggers contains an air of mystery. One cannot rise above the suspicion that perhaps some kind of *gabaq* or retribution has been at work here. For an offer of friendship and brotherhood should have been seriously considered despite their existing feud. And to in-

sist on it seems a breach of humanity. The subsequent decision of Legabaan to end all strife seems to bear this out.

But what is noteworthy, however, was the efficacy of the prayer of *Legabaan* in favor of the dead Agyu. He prayed to Almighty God to grant him the power to bring back to life Agyu's dead body. And he was given it. Just like that. Again one wonders if Legabaan's intercessory power with the Almighty God may be due to his closeness to the Suguy. After all Legabaan was already a denizen of heaven himself. In other words his prayer was thereby deserving of immediate hearing.

On the other hand, the prayers of the two ladies, Pintawan and Pintoqan, were also addressed to God Almighty in their desire to bring back to life the dead Tomitib Manaon. But the lady of Pintawan was not quite successful as her sister. But even the lady of Pintoqan was able to bring back to life Tomitib Manaon only because she and her sister had first of all recovered the soul of Tomitib from the *tonawan*. And it took her one half day to fish it out of the melting pot.

Both ladies had also prayed that "Mother's power" be theirs. Who this mother is, is not clear. Is it the power of their physical mother that was being invoked? or is it the power of the Great Mother, the Eternal Feminine, who seems to be the religious basis of matriarchy? or is it the feminine counterpart of Lintunganay ne Suguy? We do not know. What is worth noting, however, is the holistic orientation that seems to be at the bottom of Suban-on culture. For where there is question of restoring the life, it is not only the power of the male god or patriarch that is called upon, but also the power of the female or matriarch. And to this, the fact that Tomitib Manaon's spirit was retrieved from the *tonawan*, not by any man, not even by Taake himself, but by the lady of Pintoqan, again with the help of another woman, her sister, the lady of Pintawan, at whose suggestion both of them had gone out for a walk which eventually brought them to the *tonogan* or to *tonawan*. And after they had retrieved the spirit of Tomitib Manaon, they presented it to Taake.

In the *tonawan*, the soul of Tomitib was still very active with his shield and his *karisan*. As mentioned already, it took the la-

dies half a day to fish out his soul with a kerchief. Once the soul of Tomitib was out of the cauldron, the prayer of the lady of Pintoqan proved effective. Tomitib was restored to life. And they were equivalently married after the mutual exchange of betel chew and rings. But one thing we must bear in mind in the restoration of life of Tomitib was the part played by both women. This is what I mean by the *holistic orientation of Suban-on culture*.

II-B. PRAYER TO THE DIWATA

In an earlier episode after the famous dream of Agyu, he told the numberless warriors gathered in the large receiving hall, that he was not sure that the highest Diwata would really bring about the vision of devastation which he had dreamed about. However, he confesses that his

conscience is deeply aroused
For all of you, my brothers.
(*Agyu*, 1834-35)

Indeed, since Agyu has become a datu, no enemy as yet has cried victory over Yandang and lived. So he evinced his own doubts about the truth of his dream:

Indeed I am not sure myself
That we shall really encounter
Yapamaya' ne Suguy,
We do not have the assurance
That we shall come face to face
With Yegpintad ne Diwata.
(*Agyu*, 1847-52)

Then he told the countless warriors assembled in the hall:

The fact is... only the event
Of tomorrow will tell
When we do meet
Our enemies face to face.
(*Agyu*, 1853-60)

The enemy did come in hordes. In the course of the battle in the *sabangan*, Agyu sent his ring with a message to his sister, Tabagka Wad Pintua, urging her and her lady companions, to send as many betel quid chews to the men of Yandang who were faint and starving in the battlefront. After the betel chews were prepared, Tabagka prayed thus:

So, golden betel chew,
Dear betel chew,
This is what I ask you
This is my request
You must look for everyone
All must be attended to,
All the braves;
The thousands of warriors
You must give everyone;
Even those who do not chew;
Even those who do not eat.
(*Agyu*, 2168-79)

And she continued her prayer:

Diwata, my diwata,
Diwata my guardian,
It's for you to decide;
The prepared betel chew,
The limed betel quid
Which will be sent to the warriors
Which will be distributed to the worthy;
There in the roaring *sab-angan*
In the rumbling *pig-agawan*.
They are hungry;
They are starving
You must force them to take
Press them to take you.
You must enter into their mouths
So they will be revived.
So they will be re-invigorated.
(*Agyu*, 2180-97)

The betel quids were turned into *sayaw* and *kalugay*, birds like the maya, which flew straight towards the *sab-angan*.

This episode ends with the fight between young Imbalana, nephew of Agyu, and his grandfather who came disguised as the lordly chief of the enemy, but totally unarmed, except for the string of talisman on his chest. The episode comes to conclusion with the reconciliation mediated by Legabaan, and a feast in the big house.

The next two prayers were used by Tabagka after Inkilas had brought to her and the womenfolk the request of Agyu for betel chew in preparation for the battle that would take place in the next morning. When the chews were prepared Tabagka prayed:

Diwata, my diwata,
My guardian,
Pack this *munu*
Bundle this *mamaen*
So that it will only be a single *mamaen*.
A *mamaen* that is radiant,
Bright as gold
Shiny as gold.
(Agyu, 2870-79)

After the *mamaen* had gathered themselves into one golden *munu*, Inkilas picked the bundle up and returned at once to the fortress and handed the bundle to Agyu, Agyu in turn then prayed:

Diwata, my diwata,
My guardian and counselor,
Who made me great leader,
Made me a great warrior
And watches over my band;
Guards over knot
The knot of my *tubaw*,
The knot of my *tangkulu*
Unbind the *munu*,
Unfasten the *mamaen*
The golden *munu*.
(Agyu, 2940-51)

The people of Yandang were especially protected by the *diwata*, for it is said that "They were shown love by all suguys," (*Agyu*, 449), and "showered graces by the diwatas," (*Agyu*, 450), and "They were chosen from others, Most favored of all people, by Lintunganay ne Suguy (Eternal everlasting God)" (*Agyu*, 451-53), still we know that the people of Yandang were overpowered by the magic of Padsilung ha Kabatlaw, Pandinggabaw hu Langit. And that the devastation and defeat of Yandang at the hands of Kabatlaw was in answer to his prayer.

So we see this gentleman very early one morning seated on a huge rock, below the river junction of Yandang; alone and very fierce. At high noon he thought of using his magic power. (High noon is generally the witching hour). For he knew he could not win against Agyu and his people if he resorted to war. (*Agyu*, 3890-4018). The lonely, evil-intentioned man prayed:

Diwata, my diwata
My blessed guardian,
If I am not forgotten
Always with me and
Counselling;
Let darkness fall
Let dark night come.
Change my body
Change my appearance to a snake,
To a python;
Snake that enlarges,
Python that expands.
(*Agyu*, 4022-33)

After the inhabitants of Yandang had gone to sleep in the enveloping darkness, the huge snake made its way into the fortress and swallowed all the inhabitants: the men; the women, the children, including their war implements and weapons, all the wealth of Yandang. The only one who was not swallowed was Kayumbaan ha Agyu, Ligaya Tendeganen; because of his *baklaw* and his *tak-lubu*. (*Agyu*, 4060-4156)

And the snake brought all of them inside its belly into its own castle far away; and imprisoned them there.

Later on when Agyu awoke, he gradually realized that magic had been foisted on him and his kingdom. At once he went out in order to wreak vengeance on the criminal perpetrator. On his way to recover his people, he met Sawalan Tubagaan, daughter of Padsilang ha Kabatlaw, by the seashore. He was beguiled by her to a parley and a betel chew with her. He was thereby poisoned killed and thrown into the sea. But friendly crocodiles later on recovered Agyu's body, place his body on the seashore and kept a long vigil around it. It was thus that the son of Agyu, came upon his father whom he had also set out to find.

In an episode in the *Agyu*, the hero sent his son *Inkilas Pantayabat*, that is, "born with lightning flash," to the women's quarters in the big house. His mission was to request the women leader there, Agyu's sister, Tabagka ta Delag, to prepare *munu*, to lime betel nut chew, to be served to the thousand datus who were getting hungry, so that they be ready to battle the foe on the morrow. (*Agyu*, 2637-2722).

The news brought by Inkilas caused consternation among the women folk. But Tabagka put courage into them and exhorted them to prepare the thousand betel nut chews. And they did. Tabagka next prayed to her *diwata* to make it possible that the thousand betel chews become one golden *mamaen* or *munu*. (*Agyu*, 2870-79). This one *munu*, Inkilas then picked up and after thanking the ladies, he returned at once to the *alet* or fortress. He gave the bundle to Agyu, who in turn prayed that the *diwata* unbind the golden *munu*. (*Agyu*, 2940-51). He then cast the *munu* into the wide reception room; and urged all to partake of it, even the very young boys. They continued to chew until the young boys became full grown men. The next morning fortified by the betel chew, the warriors rushed to the *sab-angan* (the confluence of the rivers). When he arrived there finally, Agyu released his full force: and the stones he kicked were thrown very far. (*Agyu*, 2952-3087).

When the battle commenced, the young men moved to the elevated shore of sand. And fought bravely:

Now we will be thrilled...

For we can hear nothing

But the seeming laughter;
As if it were the cheering
Of beautiful maidens...
The shield breaking,
The bucklers shattering
Of the numerous enemies.
(*Agyu*, 3180-97)

The battle was decisive for the heroes of Mudan-udan. All their enemies perished except their leader. Agyu commended the skill of the young men. Then he bade them take their rest: to relax. The next day, he commanded them to form into three separate groups: one of the select datus, another of the young men tested in battle; and a third to be composed of Agyu himself separate from the others.

It was while the warriors were away that the enemy ships were seen massing on the shoreline below. The women in the fortress were alarmed because they had no men defenders. Tabagka, rising to the occasion, armed herself with the armor and weapons of her renowned brother, Agyu. She hastened to the shore and attacked the nearest enemy she first came upon. And a battle royal began. The enemy was taken aback, because the chieftain of the foe seeing that it was a maiden who was approaching from the fortress, decided, in collusion with his leaders, not to hurt the maiden for he would seek reconciliation and ask her to become his wife. But Tabagka did the unexpected. And she was a match to the best of the enemy, until her hair-knot was loosened. She was about to be trapped, when Agyu, unknown to anyone was returning to Yandang. He spotted his sister being attacked on the sandy beach. He hastened to rescue her.

Comments—The *diwata* which we encounter in these prayers are clearly well-intentioned towards human beings. They are like the guardian-spirits or spirit-helpers of the shamans in other parts of the world. They are at the beck and call of mortals to whom they are attached. A special relationship seems to develop between the spirits and the human beings. It is one of intimacy and friendship. The spirits obey the will of their charges: Tabagka orders the *munu* to go and seek out everyone of the Yandang war-

riors, to enter into the mouths of all, even those who do not chew, in order that the warriors may be refreshed. Although the *munu* is addressed as though it were a spirit, yet it is the *diwata*, guardian and counsellor, who is also enjoined to see to it that it forces everyone to partake of the chew. The *diwata* is invoked to gather the thousand of betel chews into one golden bundle so that Inkilas could bring it home to the fortress. And when Agyu received the bundle, he in turn addresses a prayer to his *diwata* that it may unfasten the bundle so that the thousand warriors in the reception hall can each share in it.

The enemy of Yandang, Padsilung ha Kabatlaw who was jealous of the fame of Yandang and had plotted to devastate the realm through magic, he too, is helped by a *diwata* who made him a python which could swallow all the inhabitants and wealth of Yandang and transport them all as prisoners to his country and castle.

II-C. PRAYER TO THE ROOSTER AND THE IDAO BIRD

In *Aliguyon*, traditional foes, Aliguyon, son of Amtalao of Hannanga and Pumbakhayon, son of Pangaiwan of Daligdigan, before fighting each other, address a prayer to the rooster and the *idao*. Under their house Aliguyon prays to the rooster:

Show us a sign
Give us a sign I charge you in my prayer
That you see not Aliguyon's defeat in war;
Answer our prayer by a sign, rooster!
(*Aliguyon*, 24-27)

Afterwards when Aliguyon had wished all the bad luck to visit his mother and not him, Aliguyon once again prayed:

Hi, little rooster, you who came first,
You were created by Darkness (*Lidum*)
You came from the Depths (*Dalum*)
Tadona of Kiangnan reared you;
Then you came to live with us,
Increasing your number in our Hannanga land

You have to scratch your food
Around the base of our posts;
If you see that we shall be no match
For the spirits of Lagud (East), the spirits of Daya (West).
Protect us from our enemies, spare us;
If anyone of us is to die.
Lipt up your bill
And start to peck
Then we will abandon our plan
Against our enemies, spirits of Lagud, spirits of Daya;
But if we are never to be vanquished
Then keep your body still, for from your act
Man can learn of death and life, *ino-ayo*.
(*Aliguyon*, 51-68)

Then Aliguyon opened the bile sac of the sacrifice rooster. He found it good.

Early the next morning, after they had awakened and cooked in preparation for their journey to Daligdigan, Aliguyon told his comrades:

Wait for me in the granary yard,
For I will do what is to be done in Hannanga.
I will ask which way to lead our force,
The idao bird I will consult
As to the way we should go.
(*Aliguyon*, 92-96)

After passing the test of skill administered by his own father, Amtalao, Aliguyon went to the forest beyond their rice field. He said:

Here I am, Idao,
Sing, give a sign to Aliguyon
For I am on my way to Daligdigan
To fight the son of my father's enemy;
To measure our fighting skill
In the field of battle.
(*Aliguyon*, 136-38)

The *idao* started to chirp, to dart from the field and Aliguyon was confident of the reassurance. (*Aliguyon*, 140-43)

In Daligdigan, after Aliguyon had shouted his challenge to Pumbakhayon and his intention to "renew the hostility between your father and mine" (*Aliguyon*, 203), Pumbakhayon caught one of their roosters and having gathered his comrades, conferred with them in the center of the village. This was his prayer:

I sacrifice you, our rooster,
Because I am going
To the ricefield enbankments to attack
Aliguyon, son of Amtalao
To find our skill on the enbankment.
Shall they fight Pumbakhayon to a draw
Show us by a sign.
(*Aliguyon*, 220-22)

Then Pumbakhayon repeated the self-prayer to the little rooster that Aliguyon had prayed in Hannanga. (*Aliguyon*, 228-45). Towards the end of epic in Hannanga, just before the reconciliation of the two families, once again Pumbakhayon prayed the self-same prayer, except for some variation, for now he is asking that the newly weds, Aliguyon and Bugan, will have a prosperous life.

Hi! little rooster, you who came first,
You were created by darkness; you came from the Depths,
Tadona of Kiangnan reared you;
Then you came to live with us,
Increasing your number in our Hannanga land.
If you see that we shall have to fight
The spirits of Lagud, the spirits of Daya,
That one of these will die,
That some of us will die,
Lift your bill
And start to peck;
Then we will abandon our plan
Against the spirits of Lagud, the spirits of Daya,
The source of children.

If they will have many chickens and pigs.
And much rice,
So that they will become prosperous,
Rich aristocrats of Ifugao,
Then keep still, for from you
Men can learn of death, of life, *ino-ayo*
(*Aliguyon*,)

Then he cut the chicken to see the bile sac of the rooster. Seeing it good, he put it aside; then he started to drink much and sing songs.

Comments— From these prayers to the rooster and the *idao*, we realize that these two birds are divinatory for the Ifugao. The chirping of the latter, its darting across the field is considered an assurance or confirmation of what was asked for, namely, victory in the coming battle. The same is true of the movements or non-movements of the former, and the condition of its bile sac.

The basis for the rooster's divinatory quality seems to be the fact that it is *believed to have been created before man*. It came from the very depths of the world and was created by the the original Darkness. Its crowing at the onset of dawnlight seems to be symbolic of its being able to see reality ahead of man. The rooster was first raised in Kiangang by Tadona; then it has spread in number all over Hannanga, Daligdigan and the Ifugao land. Because it scratches for food around the very posts that support man's dwelling, it even has closer connections with man. Thus it is that it can foretell for man what will do him good or evil. It can see beforehand the enemies of man who will either vanquish him, or whom he will vanquish. Hence its action "lifting its bill or pecking can alert man against impending ill" even as its still posture can inform man of success. Not only its actions, but even the condition of its bile sac can tell man of good or evil event.

A word must be said, however, about the spirits of Lagud (the East) and Daya (the West) who are called "enemies" both by Aliguyon and Pumbakhayon. It is interesting to note that one's enemies are linked with the spirits. For in the context of

native Philippine religious ideas, especially the idea of each man having guardian spirits, we can consider these spirits whether from the East or the West, as espousing the cause of their charges, and even fighting for them. Thus they may be regarded also as the enemies of either Aliguyon or Pumbakhayon.

III. RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN FOR HIS ACTS

To be the subject of praise or reproach for one's deliberate action is a prerogative of man. Because he alone of all earthly creatures is endowed with a conscience which is not only a sense of what is moral, but above all an imperative, a command springing from the inner recesses of the human spirit, urging man to do what is good and avoid what is evil. Also connected with this is the capacity to blame oneself for not acceding to the dictates of his conscience.

In *Aliguyon* while the struggle between our hero and his rival remained undecided, it was rumored around Ifugao land that Pumbakhayon had been mercilessly speared by Aliguyon in Daligdigan. So Daulayan, partly in order to impress Aliguyon and partly to ingratiate himself to his future brother-in-law whose sister Bugan he desired for wife, came to Daligdigan and persuaded finally Pumbakhayon to allow him to use his (i.e., Pumbakhayon's) spear as he (i.e., Daulayan) struggles with Aliguyon. But Daulayan was no match for Aliguyon. In their first exchange of spear shots, he could hardly catch the spear of the hero. Finally he was hit in the leg between the brass rings and had to extend his beads to Aliguyon begging him to spare his life in exchange of these. Pumbakhayon when informed of the defeat blames Daulayan:

What a shameful curse is Daulayan,
The son of Dinuganan!
Who cares about him anyway?
The one who merits my favor
For brother-in-law is Aliguyon...
(*Aliguyon*, 701-05)

And Maggapid, Daulayan's own mother who had counselled him earlier against embroiling himself in the conflict between the two heroes also expresses her regrets:

You see, you don't heed your mother;
 Why don't you listen to her words?
 Did your mother not tell you to avoid trouble
 But search for happiness?
 Where is another one whose name is Daulayan
 And does not listen to his mother Maggapid's advice?
 (*Aliguyon*, 712-16)

In the final struggle between Baranugan and Saragnayan, the latter called upon his allies both from the upperworld and from the underworld. And *Baranugan* seeing their great multitude exclaimed:

What a crowd of helpers!
 Such foolhardy men!
 What a pity should all of you
 In this battle be overthrown.

He added:

You who came to help, go home
 To your dwelling places return;
 No part have you in this;
 Not a thing to do with this
 Dispute with Saragnayan.
 (*Labaw Donggon*, 1574-78)

But the allies in full force shouted and danced, brandished their spears and krises. At this instance, *Asu Mangga*, the elder brother said: "That utu, is enough. Repeatedly you have warned them. What else could we do? Leave them when they want to fight." (*Labaw Donggon*, 1600-05). After the bloody struggle so many allies of Saragnayan perished so that:

... a rainbow had formed
 over the flooded hills
 The blood had oozed so mightily
 The downpour was so heavy.
 Odoyyyyyyyyyyy

This is the substance of the men
From the upper and lower worlds
Routed by Baranugan . . .
(*Labaw Donggon*, 2094-2101)

Afterwards when Labaw Donggon had been discovered by his brothers Humadapnen and Dumalaplap hiding for shame within a fishnet, shivering, unable to hear and also out of his mind, he was brought first to the Underworld to visit Anggoy Doronoon and later to Handog at the mouth of the Halawod, to his first wife Anggoy Gimbitinan. She pitied her husband and asked what could be done to restore the image of this hero. She said addressing Anggoy Doronoon:

Our husband I pity
For our beloved I feel sorry.
But this happened only,
Blamed Anggoy Gimbitinan:
Because of your ambition,
Labaw Donggon,
Because other men's wives you coveted;
Because a skillful warrior
Odooyyyyyyyyyy
You wished to abduct other men's women;
You wanted to have another maiden
Called Nagmalitong Yawa
Sinagmaling Diwata.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 2185-2201)

In *Taake*, Tomitib Manaon, the son of Sakabandar and close friend of Taake, the son of Tinoway, upon learning that Taake had been away for seven months already, was convinced that the Subanon he had seen in his dream who was being oppressed by enemies in a far away land was no other than Taake. And he was resolved to go out and find him in order to assist him; so, like Taake when sailing over the deep, he fell into the *pusod ha dagat* (navel of the sea) and landed on the shore of the kingdom of Keboklagan. Then he looked for his friend and found him fighting with Sorotan Domatong. At once Tomitib rushed at Domatong and "like a rope they twisted." Tomitib addressed Domatong:

Now you have tried, epaq,
this bayawan (kinsman-in-law)
this Tomitib Manaon.
Now you are bathed in your own blood.
Now you have seen it.
(*Taake*, 2883-39)

Tomitib was reprimanded by Taake:

Had you noticed me
you would not have rushed up;
you would not have fought him
No harm would befall him.
(*Taake*, 2893-96)

In reply Tomitib explained himself:

Belaaq, I am sorry
I only pitied you.
They had maltreated you.
Pity for you,
You are alone.
(*Taake*, 2900-04)

At this juncture, the wife who had watched Tomitib take up the cudgels against Domatong, came down and entertained her kinsman-in-law. She offered him *mamaq*. And this made Tomitib think deep thoughts:

Why did I rush in?
That was bad.
My brother married,
I, also, want to marry.
(*Taake*, 2916-19)

Then he excused himself alluding to his nature:

But man commits mistakes
We have the pattern of behavior
According to our nature.
(*Taake*, 2920-22)

His error made him smile and laugh. The lady of Pintawan, Taake's wife, thought within herself that Tomitib Manaon's action was not altogether blameworthy.

Epaq, it is their fault
it is their mistake.
What can a man do?
If provoked, he will kill.
(*Taake*, 2932-35)

Taake after he had won the heart of the lady of Pintawan and they were now living as husband and wife became the object of hostility on the part of at least two datos of Keboklagan; Sorotan Domatong and Town Salip Satoron. They planned to make a sacrifice of the Suban-on who had come. Dirtied we are by an ignorant person. (*Taake*, 1785-90). Hearing what the datos planned to do, the lady of Pintoan, a very dear friend and almost a sister of the lady of Pintawan, paid the couple a visit. Her advice was for them to leave Keboklagan at once and be saved the trouble. The wife of Taake was in favor of the suggestion. But Taake was against it. And his reason is that his conscience is clear. He has not done anything wrong. If die he must, he is ready to die. Sentiments worthy of a hero. Taake reasons thus:

I am not leaving, no fault have I.
Though a wife I have married,
I did not steal her,
Father did not tell me
nor mother did, that if hardships I meet
in distant places homeward I should go.
My folks may not hear if I meet death;
It is my fate
It is my fortune
It is my destiny.
So you will know, even my father was already dead
a long time ago.
All of us will die,
I am looking forward to my own death.

If I die, if death comes tomorrow.
That is beyond help. Nothing we can do.
(*Taake*, 1894-1918)

After the arrival of the kinsmen of Taake in Keboklagan, Taake and Tomitib Manaon paid a visit to Saulagya Maola. In the course of the conversation, Saulagya Maola freely admitted the mistake of his people in offending Taake. He referred to the promise he had made to the lady of Pintawan when she was still very young that whoever could climb the ladder of *kris*es to her *pintawan*, be it a pig or any other animal, will become her husband. And this promise of his was not honored by Lipatowan Hadyi and other datus of Keboklagan when Taake came and climbed the *pintawan*. He also admitted that he had been a cause of division in Keboklagan, by allowing the people to fight Taake. Now he is willing to have Taake marry his sister because "our sister loves the man." And Maola is willing to abide by his decision no matter what his people might say about him:

Whatever they say
even if they deem us cowards,
calling me a coward,
I shall swallow their insults to me.
(*Taake*, 3120-50)

For Saulagya Maola is in principle a pacifist:

As for me, *belaq*,
include me not;
trouble I do not want.
(*Taake*, 3157-59)

Comments—In the epic *Aliguyon* we see that Daulayan is held responsible by his own mother Maggapid for his rash act of challenging Aliguyon to a fight. He is also berated by Pumbakhayon.

In *Labaw Donggon*, the allies of Saragnayan who had trooped together to help him from the upper and lower worlds, and were subsequently decimated in a bloody encounter with Baranugan, had been warned by him and advised to return whence they came.

And since they insisted on leading a hand to Saragnayan, they too were held responsible for their own deaths. Towards the end of the epic, after Labaw Donggon was found and returned home, despite her pity for him, (Anggoy Gimbitinan) the first wife of the hero, blamed him for having coveted other men's wives.

In *Taake*, the hero reprimands Tomitib Manaon for rashly attacking and wounding Sorotan Domatong, without as much as consulting Taake before the attack. And Tomitib admitted his own impetuosity. And the hero himself would not go home because of the hostility of the Keboklagan datus, against the advice of the sister of his wife. He was willing to meet them in open combat. For he was aware in his own conscience of having done no wrong in marrying the lady of Pintawan. He was even ready to die because he was innocent of any crime. And Saulagya Maola, one of the leaders of Keboklagan, was willing to own that his fellow datus in fighting Taake were mistaken. For he made a promise to his sister, the lady of Pintawan, when she was yet a young girl, that whoever succeeded in climbing the kris-laddered *pintawan* could claim her as his wife. When Taake came and climbed the crises, he had the right to marry her. And the datus of Keboklagan to a man should abide by this promise and accept Taake as the lawful husband of their sister, even though he was a Subanon.

IV. THE RIGHTS OF THE HUMAN PERSON

Throughout the epic of *Taake*, we cannot miss the importance given by the epic singer to the right of the human person. Taake's refusal to go home because of the hostility of the local Keboklagan datus against him as a Subanon; his refusal to be intimidated, and his willingness to meet them on equal terms shows he was conscious of his rights as a human being.

Saulagya Maola's willingness to accept the mistake made by his fellow datus against Taake, when they refused to him the right that Saulagya had given to whoever should succeed in climbing the *pintawan* to marry their sister, is again a tacit but real acceptance of the rights of a man to make a suit for the one he loves.

Lam-ang's insistence before Sumarang to try his luck in courting Doña Ines Cannoyan is again an instance of this.

A very clear instance of the rights of the human person to be treated with respect and consideration is found in *Taake* when the followers of Tomitib Manaon and Taake, the son of Bintowanan and the son of balo laki, arrived on the shore of Kebok-lagan for the first time. The son of balo laki lay upside down on the sand. As he lay, his companion, the son of Bintowanan, gave him a kick. His reason?

Shame on you
Are you not ashamed?
Try to look
Try to see.
There are two ladies standing on the log
looking at us.
(*Taake*, 2950-56)

But the son of balo laki reprimanded him for kicking him, for he is a human being, not an animal. And waxing philosophical he continues:

Those who are chiefs
are not the same.
There are high-ranking datu;
some have a great power
some have but little.

And he claims that he has more power than the son of Bintowanan. Why?

It seems I am higher than you.
Since your stay here
You have not noticed
a broken fishing line — so our belaq
must have fallen down here.
(*Taake*, 2960-75)

Then he picked up the broken pieces and handled it to his companion who received them with a wink of approval.

V. HUMANE FEELINGS IN THE EPICS

When we speak of humanity, we mean primarily the quality of being human, the possession of kind feelings, dispositions and sympathies of man. Humanity includes, besides, kindness and benevolence, and the quality of being oriented not towards one's self interest, but towards the good of others. This we know to be verified especially in the qualities of generosity and selflessness. Let us now examine our epic traditions to see whether these qualities also obtain in them.

In *Agyu* we meet with Anilaw Mayun Anlaw, son of Agyu who lived with his mother at Malayan ha Inbunsud Langit ha Nakatana, a place very far from Yandang. One morning the child seeing the objects hanging by the wall: a shield, a lance and a dagger asked his mother how they were called. The mother at first would not tell for the reason that he was still a child. But because the child cried in his desire to know their names, she finally relented and said: the shield was called *kalasag aneg-egen*; the spear was *bankaw balintuwasan*. Still desirous to know more, the child kept crying and refused to chew betel quid. So the mother revealed to Anilaw that these instruments belonged to Mayungba Dig-Lenawen, his own father, who lived in far off Nengnengan; and that they were meant to become his own when he become big and will search for his father.

Hearing all this, Anilaw decided to go out into the wide world and look for his father. Through her tears, the mother untied the *libun* or *binulay* or travelling bag. She opened it and there she found the powerful charms of Agyu, the *tabklubu* and the *dalak*. These she gave to him:

In case you meet...
Someone utterly cruel
Someone very mean.
(*Agyu*, 4646-49)

Then she handed to him also the "especially made shirt; it is woven hair; it is interlaced tresses. For it is invulnerable to spear. It is unpierceable by lance. Likewise by a bolo. So with

poniard. Hold the shield. Clasp the buckler. Also the spear. The lance too." (*Agyu*, 4652-63)

When Anilaw left his mother's house the shield spoke to him thus:

Child, you ride
On the *dalinaynan ambengen*
so that we can reach soon
Dagunalan ta Yugung
At Libalan ta Madaging.
(*Agyu*, 4692-99)

While Anilaw was traveling upstream he spotted away in the distance something unusual; gathered around on the sandy beach was a group weeping. But they did not look like him. For indeed they were crocodiles, bewailing the dead body of *Agyu* which they had retrieved from the bottom of the sea. The leader of the caymans spoke up. And the human feeling is quite evident in his words:

My dear followers,
Cease weeping.
For someone has come...
A human being
Our prayers were granted.
You, who have just come...
I hope I shall not be cursed
By your little guardians...
For I will hurry up...
To tell what is in my mind...
Do not be afraid
If we look differently from you
We are called crocodiles
We are named caymans.
(*Agyu*, 4813-38)

Minayun listened attentively and then he took the limed betel nut chew prepared by his mother and he placed it between the lips of Mayungba with this prayer:

Diwata, my diwata,
My faithful guardians,
My little watchers,
Let this betel quid melt like an ointment;
Let this betel chew melt like oil
Let it be absorbed by the body...
Let it find
The abode of his life;
Let it search for
The dwelling place of his life.
(*Agyu*, 4859-69)

And Kayumba ha Agyu started to move. He rose rubbing his eyes and he said:

I have slept too long
I have slumbered deeply.
(*Agyu*, 4884-85)

He was quickly corrected by the leading cayman:

'So you were just sleeping...
Mayungba, you died
Agyu, you passed away.
Mayungba, you were thrown
Agyu, you were cast
Into the bottom of the sea
Into the depth of the ocean.
We tried to save you
We rescued you;
That is why you were not carried...
By the swift current
By the strong undertow.
You were revived...
Because this boy arrived
Because this child came.
(*Agyu*, 4886-95)

Then followed the meeting of Anilaw and his father, and the recognition by Agyu of his powerful son.

Comments—In the above scene we see how humane the characters are. The mother refusing to answer the queries of the child for the simple reason that these matters do not yet pertain to such a callow one as he. The child's persistent crying and refusal to eat unless the mother revealed the things he wanted to be informed about; and the mother's eventual capitulation to the Child's inquiries. Her acquiescing despite her tears to the full revelation of who was the owner of the war implements and the child's relationship to the man, and the child's final departure in search of his absent father—all these are redolent of human feeling and sentiment.

It is almost difficult to tell who were the more human: the human beings or the animals. The care and solicitude of Anilaw is matched by the cayman's care and concern for the dead Agyu: how they rescued his dead body from the bottom of the sea lest it be carried away by the undertow; their keening and keeping vigil around his corpse, and the prayers they offered for someone to come and claim the body—these again are expressive of true human sentiments. Eventually after the rescue of the imprisoned princesses, braves and slaves of Yandang through the offices of Anilaw, when Agyu enjoined his son to ride his shield and go to Yandang, again we see how human and tender Anilaw was towards his dear mother whom he had left behind.

Minayun answered ...
My dear father
Beloved parent,
I will not go with you
To Dagunalan to Yugung
I shall not return with you
To Ligalan ta Madaging.
It is enough that I have met
My many fathers ...
My thousands of parents.
Likewise my brothers and sisters
Also my siblings.
So with my grandparents
So, too, my ancestors.

I shall return to Inbunsud
I shall go back to Nakatana.
I am certain
I am sure
She must be worried
She must be lonely
My mother *bai*
My parent *sinyuda*;
Just think,
My hair was still fine and tender
Just reflect
My hair was soft and short
When I left...
Now I am a young man.
(*Agyu*, 5613-44)

Then he promised some day in the future to visit Nalandangan but in his company will be:

My mother *bai*
I shall accompany my mother *sinyuda*.
(*Agyu*, 5651-52)

And this forced *Agyu* to reply:

Do not delay
You must visit Nalandangan
Bring along your parent
Take along your mother
For I miss her, too
I long for her also.
(*Agyu*, 5658-64)

This longing was awakened in *Agyu* only because of Anilaw's love for her.

The epic *Labaw Donggon*, too, is full of human feelings. This is shared as we have already seen earlier also by Baranugan. But it shines all the more brilliantly in Saragnayan who without doubt loved his one and only wife, Nagnalitong Yawa.

After Baranugan and his brother had consumed the spirit of Saragnayan which was hidden in the heart of the Paling Bukid hog, *Tigmaula*, through the help of their grandmother Alunsina, Saragnayan felt very weak. And certain that his defeat was imminent at the hands of Baranugan, he asked leave of his rival to go home and visit his wife. And Baranugan gladly gave him leave. Though with a tinge of sarcasm in his remarks. Also very human.

Spoke Saragnayan
To Buyung Baranugan
Go slowly, my son
Do not rush, my child
To my home I must go back for a while
To my dwelling I must return
To take leave of my loving wife
To leave parting words to my loved one.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1815-22)

And Baranugan replied rather cryptically:

You may go home Saragnayan
For a time to your wife
Return to your woman
Your nerves to be calmed
Overwrought you are with emotion.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1824-28)

The following scene between Saragnayan and his wife are well worth remembering. They are fraught with tender human emotion, comparable to the best in world literature.

Saragnayan cuddled his wife, sat her on his lap and rocked her in the hammock. Even as he deplored his sure defeat through the prowess and powerful charm of Baranugan, Saragnayan gives his wife his last husbandly advice:

I leave you my last wish, beloved
My love, my last advice
Should Labaw Donggon wish

To take you with him,
Be so good as to follow.
Go wherever Labaw Donggon would command,
His lawful wife you'd be.
Your husband he would be;
Whom you should love.
My last words to you are these,
These my parting words,
For this was the root cause,
This the origin of our contention
Between Labaw Donggon and me.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1840-68)

And he continues with the tender care and solicitude almost of a father for young daughter:

Only take good care,
You alone know best;
Don't ever be vain
A snob never be.
For many are the wives of Labaw Donggon . . .
But Malitong Yawa you will be first choice of Labaw Donggon.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1874-86)

Even in his defeat, you can feel the nobility and pride of this man for the surpassing beauty of his beloved wife whom he is about to lose to another.

And the final scene cannot but touch the chords of sympathy and tenderness in the human heart, seeing how full of affection and devotion Saragnayan was for whom he had struggled long and hard against Labaw Donggon. He tells his wife finally:

Sleep, my beloved
Go to sleep dear wife,
In the swaying hammock
In the linen hammock
Not long after

Hardly did a minute pass
Fell the woman fast asleep
Fell the woman into slumber deep.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1922-31)

Then lovingly, carefully:

A pillow Saragnayan
Gently placed beneath
His loved one's head.

And ever thoughtful, he enjoins the slaves:

Keep watch, *wripon*
Over her all you servants,
Vexed your *tiya* might be;
The flies may walk on her
The giant flies may annoy her
And disturb her slumber
And rouse her from her sleep.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1934-43)

And having made sure that his beloved was asleep, Saragnayan declared:

Now I go back to the strangers
Return to the Travellers I must
To Buyung Baranugan
To kill each other
In a bloody fight
In a glory combat.
(*Labaw Donggon*, 1968-72)

And thus they fought until Saragnayan was completely overcome by Baranugan.

Comments — One cannot admire fully the humanity of Saragnayan. His deep and unswerving love for his wife. Indeed he was a wise man. His last advice to her bears this out. And his utter selflessness even in the face of death, his meticulous attention to the comfort of his wife in such extreme circumstance are in-

dicative of his superior nature. In this he was even more heroic than the much-married, womanizing hero, Labaw Donggon.

In the *Agyu*, we see the old man Langunga, father of Agyu, coming back as a warrior to Yandang only for the sake of being able to visit once again his kinsfolks. He could not stand the nostalgia and loneliness he felt for his people in the underworld. So, with the consent of Gomugunal, the keeper of the dead, Langunga came disguised as a warrior. The only difference was that he did not come with weapons, except for a string of talismans of his breast.

Again in the *Agyu*, we read that Padsilung ho Kabatlaw, the father of Sawalan who administered the poisoned betel chew to Agyu while he was in search of the malefactor who had cast his magic spell on the people of Yandang, was consumed with ambition to put off the flame of Agyu's fame. That is why he planned, through magic, to consume all the inhabitants of Yandang, by asking his *diwata* to turn himself into a huge "python that expands", and swallowing all the inhabitants of Yandang, except Agyu, and bringing them all captives to his kingdom.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from our exposition that the four religious truths which we mentioned in the beginning are verified in our Philippine epics: respect for the dignity of man; the sense of equality of all men in the presence of God; the responsibility of man for his human acts; and the rights of the human person. Since these truths contain the seeds of democracy, it is also evident that our epic tradition contains the seeds of democracy.

What is significant about this is the fact that the five epics we have analyzed are products of the common people, of the grass-roots, who have not had the benefit of secondary and college education. But they were schooled in the lore and learning of their ancestors. And yet we see in their output instances of true humanity which can compare with similar expressions in the literature of the world.

If the Philippines is to develop as a community of human persons we must take into account the sense of humanity bequeathed us by our forebears. The epics we have studied are full of signs and symbols which we should ponder and consider, particularly at this juncture of our history as a people. The human and spiritual values portrayed in these epics are still valid today. In fact there is an urgent need to put our people once more in the stream of these human and spiritual values because there has been an almost concerted effort to alienate our people from the human and spiritual values that our ancestors have held in honor throughout our history.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The five Philippine epics used in this paper are the following:

a. *Lam-ang* an Ilocano epic found in *Anthropology of Asean Literatures/Epics of the Philippines*, henceforth to be referred to as *Epics of the Philippines*; edited by Jovita Ventura Castro, Antolina T. Antonio, Patricia Melendrez-Cruz, Josefina T. Mariano, Rosalla Jean Makasiar-Puno, Manila, 1983; pp. 67-106;

b. *Aliguyon*, *ibid.*, pp. 1756; c. *Labaw Donggon*, *ibid.*, pp. 119-83; d. *Agyu*, *ibid.*, pp. 192-348; and e. *Taake*, or *Ag Tobig Nog Keboklagan*. (a Suban-on epic), edited by Rev. Miguel A. Bernad, S.J., in *Kinaadman* Vol. 3 (1981), pp. 359-543. After the manner of the editors of *Epics of the Philippines* who have simplified the longish titles of the Manobo versions of *Agyu* by calling their composite text *Agyu*, and the Suban-on epic tale of "Keg Sumba Neg Sandayo" by the simple *Sandayo*, I have also renamed the Suban-on epic *Taake*, the hero of the tale. I also analyzed the *pamara* or invocation of the *Olaging* or "The Battle of Nalandangan," published in *Kinaadman*, Vol. I, (1979) pp. 156-59).

² *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*:

G L O S S A R Y

Agyu, the hero of the composite Manobo text has many other names in various versions, e.g., "Dig Dagaton," "Dayoon Dig Dagaton," "Dalomanon Mayungba." "Mayungba Dig-Lenawen," "Kayumbaanan ha Agyu," etc.

Anilaw Mayun Anlaw, or "Minayun" or "Nutu Manlag Diwata," is the son of Agyu who lived with his mother *sinyuda* or *bai* in far off Malayan ha Imbunsud/Langit ha Nakatana.

Baklaw — a bracelet worn by men made out of boar's tusk where powerful charms are kept.

The highest *Diwata* among the Manobo is also named "Suguy" or "Yegpamaya ne Suguy", or "Yegpinted ne Diwata."

Dayungba is the personified ship of death mentioned in the Bukidnon *pamara* or invocation.

Epaq means brother-in-law.

Gabaq — Bisayan word for "retribution"

Imbalana hu langit or Imbagtad Ku Malayun, the son of Tagyakuwa ta Dalag and Baanlak in the *Olagingon*, nephew of Agyu. Both names mean crack of heaven.

Inkilas Pantayabat, a son of Agyu

Kris or *karisan* a Suban-on word for kris or knife-blade.

Langunga Manghimaug, the dead father of Agyu is also called "Gulubatnon Nan Labi."

Malopanyag is another epithet given to Taake. Meaning "he fights people everywhere." Other titles are "son of Timoway," "datu of Sirangan," or "Man from Sirangan."

Pinag-agawan, the place where the sea and the rivers meet, river-mouth.

Pintawan is a high tower where the lady whom Taake married lived.

Pintoqan is a tower lower than *pintawan* where the sister of Taake's wife lived.

Nalandangan is the earth-paradise where Agyu and his clan have settled since returning from their brief sojourn in heaven. It is also called "Yandang," "Dagunalan ta Yugung," "Ligalan ta Madaging," "Yendengan," "Mudan-udan," "Nengnengan," etc.

Taklubu another name for *baklaw*, see *supra*, no. 3.

Tinampod a diwata also known as "Lambaton" or "Tinambulong," he is the Bukidnon chanter's guide and teacher. He is also described as "a half man." The motif of the half man, according to Eliade in *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Bollingen Series LXXVI), Pantheon Books, New York, 1964, p. 37, note 7, is a demonic figure frequently found in Siberian and Central Asian Mythologies. Cf. *Anakhai*, the one eyed demon of the Buryat; *Arsari* of the Chuvash (one eye, one arm, one foot, etc.); the Tibetan goddess *Ral going ma* (one foot, one emaciated breast, one tooth, one eye, etc.) Cf. also our own Philippine tradition of "Juan Pikas," (one eye, one arm, one leg).

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