

FROM *BABAYLAN* TO *BEATA*: A STUDY ON THE RELIGIOSITY OF FILIPINO WOMEN

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After a lapse of ten years following Vatican II, the Holy Father in Rome instructed all congregations of religious to conduct what have been known as “chapters of renewal” by 1975. The purpose was to search for the roots of their charism and mission — a search which led most of them to inquire into the indigenous basis of their religiosity. In other words, the usual explanation that Christianity was an imposition from the Spanish conquistadores was not enough. They wanted to know if there was something in the native spirituality of the colonized that would somehow express the same spirituality being introduced from the outside. Were the native women already religious, thus making the so-called task of “conversion” easy for the Spaniards?

It was in this light that I conducted research on the various aspects of religious life as practiced by women congregations. My study was exploratory. I discovered that no serious attempt had been made in the past to focus on this issue. Furthermore, while a lot of papers have been written on the continuity of the native or *babaylan* spirituality into the sects found in Mt. Banahaw, none has ever been written to show that *babaylans* eventually emerged as regular Catholic congregations of women.

The World of the *Babaylan*

Any attempt to locate the roots of Filipino religiosity must begin with the *babaylan* or *catalonan*. We do not know the root word that would suggest what *babaylan* (in Bisaya) or *catalonan* (in Tagalog) really meant except that in the case of *babaylan*, it sounds similar to *babae* or woman. *Catalonan* on the other hand incorporates the root *talon* which in ancient Tagalog meant forest. The meanings implied here may be valid to a certain extent because *babaylans* were mostly women or if men, were dressed like

women when performing rituals. Similarly, forests had sacred value to the *catalonan* as places where they performed important rites and rituals. *Babaylans* were said to be endowed with powers such as the ability to cure the sick and predict the right time to plant and harvest. During times of serious illness by a member of the community, the *babaylan* performed rites for the dying, invoking the powers of the *anitu* (the soul of the ancestors) to help and accept the dying to become one of them.

The powers possessed by the *babaylans* could not be simply acquired. Sometimes, s/he could secure it only through a long process of tests such as surviving a long and serious illness or a near fatal accident. At other times, the tests would involve self-inflicted punishment or penitence. The potency of the *babaylan's* powers could then be proven through the show of extraordinary prowess. For example, in Laguna in the 16th century, one such *babaylan* was said to have lifted a person into the air by a mere stroke of his hand. Another instance that showed one had become a *babaylan* would be evidence of the ability to become possessed of the *anitu* (spirit) known in Tagalog as "*pagsapi*." In this, s/he could speak with the ancestors whose message s/he then could transmit to the members of the community.

Virginity was not at all considered important for a woman to become a *babaylan*. However, being beautiful was considered an advantage. The beauty in the *babaylan* was important for in the drama, song, dance ritual that she performed, the "*kaluluwa*" (soul) that had gone astray had to be coaxed to return to the head of the sick person. It was the belief then that a person had two or more *kaluluwa* — one was always with the mortal body and the other could separate from the body. In a situation where the *kaluluwa* journeyed elsewhere, one's "*pagkatao*" (roughly, personhood), was not complete and therefore susceptible to sickness or disease. This was the reason why the *babaylan* had to perform the drama, dance and *awit* (song) ritual in which leaves, flowers and perfume were put on the head of the sick person so as to provide a place for the *kaluluwa* to sit on. The dancing was an attempt to emulate the movements of reptiles and snakes which were considered sacred creatures from the underworld.

Sometimes, non-stop dancing put the *babaylan* into a trance. This would prepare the ground for the *babaylan* to make a predic-

tion as to the fate of the sick. If the prognosis was one of the sick becoming well again, the celebration would continue with eating and drinking. But if the sick was fated to die, the *babaylan* would encourage everyone to give testimonials and eulogy to the dying — the message being that of encouraging the *anitu* to accept this person to become one of them.

To predict the fate of the sick person, the *babaylan* performed the sacrifice of an animal. In this ritual, a *catalonan* would order a young woman with beautiful clothing to pierce the sacrificed animal to death while the people kept dancing all around. Blood from the animal would be taken by the *babaylan* and a little of it would be smeared on the head of the sick as well as on everyone in the crowd. Once the animal was dead, the innards would be examined to see the omen it disclosed. Depending on the reading of the omen, the *babaylan* could order another sacrifice or the continuation of the “*pag-alay*” or testimonials to the dying. On the other hand, the meat of the sacrificed animal would be divided among the people. (BR xv, 108)

Death did not mean complete loss of the beloved. One of his *kaluluwa* would remain with the mortal body while the other would, for sometime, be lingering around and would visit the living during important celebrations and occasions when the *kaluluwa's* presence was desired. Thus, as much as possible, the remains of the dead were deposited nearby (in the case of tribal peoples) and in a sacred place either in the coastlines or the mountains (in the case of lowlanders). During celebrations of feasts, the *anitu* was called upon to become one of them in drinking and eating. Some food and wine were spilled all around with the message: “*Apo Lakay*, we are here celebrating. Join us in our feasts.”

Would a virgin be more appealing to perform the drama, dance and song ritual? As the ritual was performed mostly by married women, being virgin was not a qualification. Lack of sexual experience was considered a disadvantage for women in general for it proved that one was not attractive enough for men to desire her. This fact was bolstered by the belief then that the “*kaluluwa*” of the woman was considered incomplete unless protected by a male. Thus, when a woman became pregnant, she was in a state of “*kagampan*” which literally meant “being truly a woman.” In

death, the *kaluluwa* of the woman would cross a log bridge upon which the *kaluluwa* of the male could help her so as not to fall into "*casamaan*," a rough equivalent to the "hell" of the Christians. Thus, *babaylans* were generally those with experience and whose love life was complete.

The place of worship among the Tagalogs was called "*simbahan*." They were of different types. The most important place (*pinakasimbahan*) was usually on a hilltop in the forest, usually a cave not easily seen by people. As had been observed in San Pablo, Tiaong, Lobo, Lipa and Tanawan in the province of Batangas, just like those in some other parts of the Philippines, a *babaylan* laid on an altar roasted pig and chicken among other foods as an offering to the ancestor. The images of the ancestors were embossed or carved in rings or walking sticks were laid in such a way that decorations around them abound. Statuettes were placed on a table with a list containing as many as 163 names of dead ancestors. On such occasions, the *babaylan* was likewise called as *amanibili*. As food was offered, the *babaylan* would sing and dance to a slow *tagulaylay* song: "*halina, mga nuno, tanggapin ninyo ang hain ng inyong mga apo*" (please come, our ancestors, receive the offering of your grandsons/daughters).

The more ordinary place of worship was a shade called "*sibi*" which was attached to the house of the chieftain. As observed in Taytay (now in the province of Rizal), a *sibi* was in honor of a dead ancestor. Women congregated in the place and performed rites in low voices so as to simulate some ordinary loose talk or verbal exchanges. Apparently, this was intended to cover up the real intent of the activity, as observed by a friar during colonial times.

Upon the advent of colonial rule, the functions of the *babaylan* was duplicated by that of the friar. As the *babaylan's* influence on the native lay in healing the sick, friars adapted the same technique in their work of conversion. Father Paul Klein (a Jesuit of German extraction), for instance, compiled the various herbs and plants used for folkhealing and published a book in 1712 entitled *Remedios faciles para diferentes enfermedades* (Easy Remedies for Various Ailments). In addition, the friars were instrumental in introducing new agricultural techniques such as deep plowing, use of fertilizers and a calendar of farming activities that worked

wonders for the natives. This became an important substitute for the *babaylan's* function of rendering judgement regarding when to plant or harvest.

As the competition grew, and as friar influence became more widespread, various tactics were used by the colonizer to further diminish the *babaylan's* influence in the community. In some places, native religious women were used by the friar as helpers in the church to the extent of providing such vital services as the "*pahesus*" or the administration of the last unction to the dying. But as other congregations were more strict in allowing women to render services to the priests, women were denounced as evil. Those suspected of being *babaylans* were described as witches (*bruha*). Some of them were made to dress in yellow clothing and were paraded around town as was the practice also in Europe. In other instances, those women in whose person the spirit of the *anitu* had entered ("*sinapian*") while performing rituals of folkhealing were declared by the friars as mental deviants.

In a situation where religious women had not much choice in the practice of their religious vocation, two alternatives were left. In one instance, some of them continued to practice their craft in the mountains. In the other instance, they tried to form religious communities still attached to the parish in the style of Spanish nuns. The latter were known as *beatas*.

The World of the Nuns and *Beatas*

As early as 1598, a monastery of Santa Clara had been planned by the Spanish colonists. But it was only on October 21, 1619 when Sor Geronima de la Asuncion of the Santa Clara convent in Toledo, Spain got an appointment as an *abadesa*. The monastery in Manila was to be maintained by donations from lay persons. When the *abadesa* arrived together with some nuns on July 5, 1620 a scandal was created as some Spanish gentlemen openly petitioned the government to revoke its permission. They argued that allowing a convent to be maintained in the colony would deprive them of prospective wives from among the already few Spanish women available. The manifestations did not deter the Spanish government from creating new convents such as that

of the Santo Domingo (which became the monastery of Santa Catalina) under the leadership of Sor Francisca del Espiritu Santo.

In these monasteries, native women were refused admission. It was argued that as the natives were newly converted to the faith, they were in no position to imbibe the true nature of the religious discipline. Furthermore, it was argued that there were no previous instances when natives truly had an experience of continuous meditations and prayers and a life that was isolated completely from the world. Paradoxically, this exclusivity of Spanish religious practice created much interest and curiosity among native women.

A new tradition of religious life began with the coming of the Spanish women religious. Its focus was the preparation of the self for the moment of death. Following the teachings of St. Thomas, the religious learned that death was of two kinds. The first was original death, which just like sickness and physical defects, was a punishment that persons inherited from the first humans, Adam and Eve. It was due to their disobedience to the commandment of God not to eat the apple fruit of the tree of reason in Paradise that they were forever destined to suffer want, sin and death and the possibility of their soul being forever punished in hell. The other kind of death was one which offered the possibility of regaining Paradise. One could attain it through personal sanctification. This would include the ever conscious effort of preserving one's chastity for, as perceived by the church, sexual intercourse between Adam and Eve, as well as all activities that give pleasure to the body and the flesh, were part of inherited sin. The opposite of pleasurable experiences, such as fasting, a spartan and simple lifestyle, and humility would grant sacrality to one's person. In holiness therefore, one could attain a different death, one which should not be considered as death (or end) but a renewal of life.

In this perception, life in this world was just a "gift" lent by God and therefore, something that one was obliged to return to Him in due time. Something borrowed had to be returned back to its owner. Thus, death was not something where the mortal body simply became ashes; if it was a "beautiful death," it would in effect consist in being freed from one's responsibility and obligation to pay the loan. In one's journey to the kingdom of God, one was truly repaying his obligation and showing his debt of gratitude.

Unlike the "*kaluluwang anitu*" of the native, the Christian "soul" who reached the Kingdom of God would no longer be able to return to his family and kin; the "soul" would become part of a big family of angels, saints and other holy creatures sitting beside God in heaven.

A case in point was Sor Ignacia del Espiritu Santo who in 1747, at the early age of 21 years, tried to secure permission from the Jesuits to live a secluded life of prayer together with twelve other young women. Fr. Murillo Velarde, S.J., observed that the religiosity of these women was something to emulate, for though they were big in number and all native or mestiza, they were able to govern themselves fully and without any rumor of immoral acts and misbehaviour being said of them in the city. On the contrary, their personal sanctification was founded on a complete devotion to their profession of humility, industry in their work and possession of discipline in their spiritual exercises.

Other women religious followed the example of Sor Ignacia. In 1740, the blood sisters Dionisia and Cecilia Talampas likewise formed a group of women devoted to a life of prayer. They secured permission from the Augustinian priest of Pasig to live as a community. Among their duties in the parish was to sew the habit of the priest, make bread for the mass and perform such tasks deemed important by said priest. They likewise maintained themselves through the yield of fields which the Augustinians appropriated for them, known then as "*tierras del beaterio de Pasig.*"

It would appear then that this was a period when the different orders, on their own, allowed if not encouraged women religious to live in community. These women followed the rules of the *beatas* which were similar to those of the nuns except that whereas the nuns were completely cloistered, *beatas* were allowed to have activities outside of their houses. But even as they engaged themselves in their holy vocation, there was nothing compared to the participation of the *babaylans* in the ceremonies and rituals for the cure of the sick or the feasts for planting and harvests. Their habit was one of chocolate brown with a black veil covering the head and part of the face. The holy posture would not warrant exposure of any skin except the face. Even here, the rule of the *beata* stressed that one's eyes should always be toward the ground ("*bajos ojos*") so as not to attract males pos-

sibly passing by. The hands should always be clasped and put inside the middle sash of the habit.

In some of their practices, the *beatas* seemed to emulate the *babaylan*. For instance, penitence and fasting that *babaylans* used to do to attain power was likewise the method used to sacralize the body. A form of it, that of putting belts made from thorns of metal around one's waist and mortifying the body through continuous flogging with a belt of spliced wood, was also called discipline ("*disiplina*"). This supposedly strengthened one's physical resolve to face God at the moment of death. But in emulation of the power of the *babaylan* to cure the sick, the Spanish friars taught the *beatas* a new way — that the prayer life they followed would not only cure bodily sickness but the sickness of the "soul." Two works in the dialect were used for their reflection — "*Ang inferno na bubucsan sa tauong Christiano, at nang houag masoc doon*" by Fr. Paul Klein, S.J. and "*Pensamientos Christianos, sa macatouid manga panimdimin nang tauong christiano*" by Fr. Bohours, S.J. In this case, the cure of the soul indicated did not concur with the *babaylan* concept of "*kaluluwa*" which was incapable of being sick; in the *babaylan* tradition, it was the body which got sick due to the departure of the "*kaluluwa*" from it.

There were three vows that the *beatas* had to follow according to their rule or "*regla*": obedience, poverty and chastity. Of these three, stress was put mainly on chastity as this was a value new to the native women. Whereas in the *babaylan* tradition, women had to make themselves attractive to men, the ideal in the new order was that of someone who never had sexual intercourse and was called a virgin. As has already been noted, this was part of a view that original sin committed by Eve and Adam in the garden of Paradise included that of having sex. Thus, the rules of the *beatas* included explicit statements as to how to sleep or take a bath. At any moment, one was prohibited to take off one's clothes since any exposure of the skin was scandalous in the eyes of God. When asleep, one had to cover herself with a blanket and sleep sideways facing a wall since, in this position, the devil or evil spirit lurching around would not have the capability to rape her. They considered as evidence of the work of the devil the occasions when one had "wet dreams." The way to prevent this was

by putting around the body several layers of blanket and clothing. Likewise, sleep was considered a moment when the body was half dead and if one failed to wake up, she could decently present herself to God, i.e., as somebody fully clothed.

Synthesis of the Two Traditions

Knowing fully well the diametrically opposed view of the after-life and of the religious practices that a woman had to do to attain sacredness, it may be asked if there were ever cases of *babaylans* becoming *beatas* or *beatas* becoming *babaylans*. Or to put it in another way, was there a continuity in the religious tradition from the pre-Spanish to Spanish times? To answer these questions, two types of evidence may be used, the documentary proofs and the contextual. Were there explicit statements in old documents where former *babaylans* had been cited as having entered the *beaterios*? If there was none, could we deduce from chronicles and reports suggestions at least, that there had been a continuity of religious tradition?

Despite our efforts at looking for concrete evidence from friar chronicles, we found no specific cases of *babaylans* becoming *beatas*. Instead, we found friar accounts in which they declared victory in exposing the *babaylans* and putting them to shame in public. If ever there was continuity, this happened in reverse — that of a *beata* becoming a *babaylan*. The most recent case was that of a native Benedictine nun who left the monastery to found Ciudad Mistica in Mt. Banahaw. Her name was Bernarda Balitaan. Her stint with the Benedictines would perhaps explain why certain practices in *beaterios* and monasteries got incorporated into the rituals of the said sect. The most obvious indication of synthesis could be seen in the use of discipline during Fridays and Sundays during which belts embedded with iron spikes are used to flog the body.

The more overwhelming proofs of synthesis may be found in the contextual evidence deduced through an analysis of available texts as well as present-day religious practices.

■ **The Synod of Manila in 1771 and that of Calasiao in 1773.**

A close reading of the results of these synods would tell us that not everything was well insofar as the conversion effort was concerned. The synods were a general assembly of the religious in order to assess their apostolic work — basically an attempt to critique the various tasks of the clergy and to agree on certain mandates to be followed in order to solve perceived problems. One conclusion from the synods was the decline in morality from the clergy to the ordinary natives. Due to the lack of community life among the priesthood, many were discovered not to have practiced celibacy. Some pastors were found to have entered homes, getting drunk and committing immoral acts.

The synod was also concerned that a lot of dancing and singing were done inside churches, something thought of as immoral during those times. Of women, the synod noted that they entered churches without a veil and instead used just a small handkerchief on their heads. Most young women were also given to pre-marital sex. Thus the mandate of the synod was to the effect that the eyes of mothers should be opened to their obligation of bringing their daughters to the sacrament of matrimony chaste and clean, making sure that they hand her over to her prospective husband as a true virgin, the condition upon which God would provide her with blessings. It was therefore ordered by the assembly that the clergy teach the value of virginity and modesty to the women, as these values were unknown in these islands.

■ ***“Lagda” and “Urbana at Felisa”***

These two works were concerned with good manners and right conduct to be followed by young women. The first was a rule booklet. The second was a supposed exchange of letters between two sisters — one living in the province of Bulakan and the other, studying in the Colegio de Sta. Isabel in the city of Manila. Through the letters, the older sister advised the younger sister how to behave in different situations

particularly in relation to men. She was also reminded about the last wish of their deceased father for them to enter a *beaterio*. Written towards the second half of the 19th century, they could indicate the moral state of the time at first glance. By looking into what had been prohibited — why make prohibition if there were no cases of “immoral acts” — we may be able to deduce the practices that could show a continuity of traditions. From the *lagda*, for example, it may be noted that excessive swaying of the hips and clothes in which the inside of the body could be seen was not conducive to decency. Even at home, the woman was advised not to lift her skirt or to use it to fan herself. She was advised to be clothed at all times, even while asleep, so as not to scandalize God. All these were related to the virtue of virginity. Thus, losing one’s virginity was thought of as like a plate which falls and breaks — once lost, it can not be brought back to its former state.

St. Agnes (Ca. 304 A.D.) was viewed as the ideal woman. She was said to be a Roman girl of 12 to 14 years old who lived at the time of Diocletian. As she was a beautiful girl, many a Roman soldier wooed her. One time, an officer took her and attempted rape but Agnes chose death rather than surrender her virginity. Another woman often mentioned and who also died a virgin was St. Philomena in whose honor a cult had been made in the 19th century.

■ “*Awit-Sayaw*” as Ritual

“*Awit-Sayaw*” literally means “song-dance” and is a convenient description of the various feast rituals in which women, particularly the young, are involved. An example of one such ritual is the Obando, Bulakan fertility dancing. On the feast of Sta. Clara, married couples who wish to have children sway their hips to the tune of the “*pandanggo*” as the procession moves through the town. Once the virgin is inside the church, the revelry is intensified; there is a mixture of dancing, singing and shouting as if the participants are in a trance. Some of them even step on top of the altar while performing the “*awit-sayaw*.” It is believed that the swaying of hips and continuous singing would encourage the life spirit

to enter one's body and provide the condition for the pregnancy of the woman.

Inquiries as to who began the ritual have reached nowhere. No one knows or ever knew who started it. Instead, old folks spoke of a time when fishermen caught in their net (or *salambao*) the virgin (*Birhen de Salambao*) and once back to shore, were met by a group of dancing women. What made the women congregate on the shore and dance was something no one could explain except to say that the spirit could have entered their bodies. Later, it became a tradition that at the feast honoring the virgin, women would come and dance in the manner of the first ones who welcomed her to the shore.

There are other feasts where song and dance play a part. The specific ways that they are performed vary, but the essentials remain the same. There is that belief that through the swaying and singing, the spirit is encouraged to enter one's person and once already there, one receives the gift from God. Other places where the tradition may be found are in Pandacan, Manila ("*buling-buling*"), Pakil, Laguna ("*turumba*"), old Makati ("*awit-sayaw*") and in other places of the Tagalog region.

When one considers the feast of the Black Nazarene of Quiapo as some sort of a dance, then one comes to the realization that the dance ritual is truly embedded in Filipino culture. The extent to which this is Filipino may be seen from the existence of a similar ritual among the juramentados of the Muslim region. The swaying and the dancing preluding a suicidal mission may be seen in this light.

And as proof that without being self-conscious about it, people incorporate dance in religious celebrations, here is an account of columnist Rosalinda L. Orosa of a recent experience:

The other simple pleasure I had recently was witnessing the *salubong* early Easter morn in Paranaque's United Village where the spirit of community living truly exists. Although I am not from Paranaque, the people there readily took me in. Thus, during the *salubong*, I was an involved spectator.

Little angels were self-consciously fidgeting in their feathery costumes and outsized wings, while they kept their proud fathers busy taking snapshots for posterity. What amused me no end was the statue of Christ being carried on a canopy. Because the men bearing the canopy on their shoulders were swaying to the lively band music, the statue of Christ seemed to be dancing, too.

Preliminary Observations

We have not explored in this short essay the *baculos*, sermons, confessionals and other documents that may also point to the continuity or discontinuity of the two traditions of religiosity particularly of Filipino women discussed in this paper. With the available materials studied, we have come to the conclusion that the sensuous swaying or dancing as well as continuous singing and even shouting is at the cog of religiosity among Filipino women. Sometime in the 18th century, the Catholic bishops and priests tried to prohibit these dancing and singing and even called them pagan, but to no avail. By studying the present day feasts, we could say that a continuity has existed from *babaylan* days to the present. The idea of "*paglangkap*" or "*pagsapi*" of the *kaluluwa* with the person of the women while in the process of healing the sick could be seen in the tradition of the fertility rituals of Obando and elsewhere, a practice that has found expression in the Catholic religious' belief in charism. In both cases, the person becomes a recipient of a gift from the spirit. The person's actions are no longer his/hers but guided and impelled by the same holy spirit that possessed or entered his/her body.

Where lay the discontinuity of the tradition? The most important was the change of the priestly profession from a mainly female to a male domain. Until the implementation of Vatican II mandates, the women religious were the implementors of instructions from the bishops and archbishops. They ran schools and orphanages or conducted social services and other apostolates. In the 1920s, they became very important in offering good education to the daughters of the elites as a crucial step to influencing the mason-dominated government. By preparing future wives of

government officials, the Church was able to regain glory lost during the nationalist struggles of the 1880-1890s. The best evidence that they succeeded was the renunciation of masonry by Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon through the instigation of his *colegio*-educated wife Aurora.

Another area of discontinuity lay in the continued emphasis and the value held by most women religious on virginity and celibacy. In terms of the use of thick clothing and other self-mortifications associated with holiness, there seems to have been a change in the sense that the practices have been liberalized. Those working with rural and poor sectors may even wear ordinary clothes. The concept of the vow of poverty and charity may now come in other forms. Thus, working diligently on one's specialized line may be a performance of one's vow of charity. A simple lifestyle may be enough proof for one's vow of poverty. But the idea of a complete woman ("*kagampan*") as they viewed it in the *babaylan* tradition is still alien to the women religious of today.

With the advent of Vatican II, new forms of liturgy are being experimented on. Practices perceived as paganism in the 18th century are now being rediscovered and given new interpretations as the religiosity of the poor. The new church, perceived as communion or community has been viewed in the most recent Plenary Council (1991) as an opposite of the old, perceived as Christendom. There is a conscious effort to look at the church as a community of believers the majority of whom belong to the poor and the oppressed unlike before when the important thing was simply to gain adherents through conversion and through the help of the Empire. The gates have been opened for women and men religious to experiment with new liturgies, to revise prayers and even introduce contextualized interpretations of the Gospel.

I would like to end with a personal footnote on how this religiosity has changed. On the occasion of the death anniversary of my father last November 1991, the old priest of our town who offered the mass recounted in his homily a personal experience. He said that two months before, he was hit by a speeding truck while a procession was going on. For days, he was rendered unconscious in the hospital. For reasons he could not understand, a man who looked like a doctor began stroking his hair. He recog-

nized in his mind's eye his father, a medical doctor now dead, and himself, still a young man. His father asked which part of his body still ached. The priest at that moment seemed to have been relieved, and woke up sometime afterwards. He regained strength and miraculously returned to his parish as if nothing serious had happened. So, during the homily, the priest began asking us if our father had not visited us. He suggested that we pray hard for him to come and be with us during times when we celebrate as a family.

As my studies had shown that the original Christian view of the afterlife is a journey of no return, the story of the priest caught me by surprise. Throughout the mass, I reflected on the meaning of what the priest said. Is the belief in the *anitu* as a *kaluluwa* protecting the living or joining in the family celebrations an accepted outlook in the Church? Or is this something embedded in the subconscious that without effort emerges as a particular, specific manifestation of being Filipino?

Reference

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