

THE ETHNIC TRADITION IN PHILIPPINE DANCE

Ethnic dances are found among the ethnolinguistic groups scattered all over the Philippine islands, who have not been substantially Westernized, either by Spain or the United States. These dances, which are integral to the community's way of life, are: the ritual dances, which connect the material world to the spiritual; the life-cycle dances, which celebrate an individual's birth, baptism, courtship, wedding, and demise; and the occupational dances, which transform defense and livelihood activities to celebratory performances.

Ritual Dances

Rituals sustain the spiritual and social life of the indigenous Filipinos. Closely attuned to nature, believing in the spirits that keep their environment fruitful and their selves alive, the ethnic Filipinos enact these rites—always with instrumental music, chanting, and often dancing—as “part of communal life cycles, but they also serve as a popular medium of dramatic expression and entertainment that reflects the people's nature, culture and aspirations” (Amilbangsa 1983:1).

At the center of these rites is the shaman called *baylan* or *babaylan* in the south and *mumbaki*, *mandadawak* or *manalisig* (a lesser mandadawak), *mambunong* or *katalonan* in the north. The shaman speaks in a mysterious language “intelligible” to the gods, offers the sacrifices, and dances in a trance. According to Robert Fox (1982:209-210), the *babaylan* among the Tagbanua of Palawan are of *ginuu* (noble) standing, have an “aura of magico-religious potential” and are “stable individuals who often have a deep understanding of how the society works and of psychological problems of individuals.” It is not unusual that they cannot dance except in the *pagdiwata* ceremonies, done during the *bilug* (full moon). Around the shaman is the support of kin (like a help called *taga-iring*) who form a sodality.

The position may be inherited or received by “calling.” Among the Tagbanua of Palawan, the *pagdiwata* is a ritual of thanksgiving for the rice harvest and for general well-being. The *babaylan* dances the characteristics of the spirits who enter them in a trance. Before an altar full of offerings (rice wine in jars, china bowls of rice, betel, ginger, onion, pepper, candles), dressed and armed with an *alindugan* (hood), *palaspas* (fronds), a kris or dagger, and accompanied by gong playing, the *babaylan* chants on a ceremonial swing, drinks, and dances. Lighting a cigarette may symbolize “the fire of the supernaturals” while floating a turtle on the wine may mean the visit of a sailor spirit who fights epidemics (Fox 1982:224-225). Lasting from 8 to 12 hours, the *pagdiwata* invites not only the highest deity Magindusa but also other deities to join in the feast of drinking, eating, chewing of betel, and smoking, so that none might be slighted.

Out in Bukidnon there are the *hinaklaran* (offering) festival and the ritual of the three datu. In the first there is chanting and dancing around an altar. The women

dance the well-known *dugso* while a baylan ceremoniously chants her own invocation. The ritual can go on for some six hours to assure the blessings of the spirits, a good harvest or good fortune. Also for everyone's well-being, the rite of the three Kaamulan *datu* (chieftain) enacts a regional unity where the datu offer chicken of various colors, pouring their blood beside offertory water and coins. In the past, the new datu Man Sicampo Man Langcayan of Tikala-an (formerly Pusod ha Dagat or Navel of the Sea) invited Kapetan Pedro Tayabong, datu of Lambagowon (now Cagayan de Oro), the sultan of Dodsaaan, the sultan of Maguindanao, and the sultan of Tagolaan for a pact of friendship. They sealed this over a dug hole where they placed a Quran, a Bible, a durian fruit, and chicken, and over which they placed a *balagun* (rattan vine) which symbolized a would-be betrayer's fate. A feast of seven days followed.

Up north, the Tinguian in the mountains of Abra worship their anito and their great god Kabunian. They are led by a medium called mandadawak or *alpogan*. Their *pinauban* ritual pours out blood over or ties strings around the *pinaeng*, stones of unusual shape found at the entrance of the village. The story goes that the spirit of Kabunian (or Apadel, Kalagang) once entered these pinaeng stones. Male participants may pray the *diam* or *dimdimi*, and make a pig cry for the gods to hear. The women dance around and sing the *salidumay*. All these are to ask for rain or pray for everyone's well-being.

When life is threatened by illness, the Tinguian celebrate the *bawi*. The *bawi-bawi*, a simulated house, is the center around which a mandadawak and his/her assistant make a pig cry, again for the spirits to hear. In the *manerwap*, the Bontoc bring baskets of chicks to the hills; their chirping supposedly helps attract the spirits. For a similar cause, the Apayao stage a *dawak*. The female mandadawak exchange verbal chants, take up large scarves and head axes, sprinkle the sick with water. Squatting, the sick and their relatives are all covered with a ceremonial or symbolic blanket. When the cure is effected, everyone rises up to dance.

The Aeta of Zambales stage the *anituan* to drive away the evil spirits that cause sickness. The patient or patients are covered with a red cloth and are surrounded by the shaman and the patient's relatives. They threaten the spirits to go away with their bows and arrows, spears and sticks. Should this fail, they resort to talking with the spirits and propitiating them with gifts and food. Effect is declared when the red cloth is pulled away, and everyone joins in a celebratory dance of shuffling walks, shaking, and skipping around.

Believing that they are descendants of the union of the sun and moon, the Mandaya of Davao hold various rituals to court the favors of various environmental spirits. In their *anito baylan*, each of the female baylan holds a red scarf and a small *kalasag* (shield) with shell and bead attachments which are sounded with the gongs and drums. They shuffle around in curves and circles, moving forwards and backwards, spinning and shaking in a trance. The dance is full of agility and vigor, and is colorful with the Mandaya's dyed and patterned abaca clothes,

elaborate headdresses, and red scarves.

As profoundly religious a people are the Bagobo, also of Davao. They believe in Pamulak Manobo who created the heaven and the earth, and molded the first man named Toglai and woman named Tolibon. Their daily life is ruled by rituals, among these the awesome four-day *gin-um* which of old included human sacrifice. Like the Mandaya, they are colorfully dressed in their tie-dyed *tinalak* (abaca) clothes and elaborate ornamentation, perhaps suggested by their god's passage over a rainbow to descend to Mount Apo to create Toglai and Tolibon.

Their assiduous if sometimes fearful religiosity includes the healing ritual where the female baylan dolefully officiates before a tall altar with incense, and daubs with blood of the sacrificial chicken the body of the sick. They also flick a red cloth or scarf to help effect an appeal to the gods and give vigor to their patients. The patient himself finally joins in the dance, a cleansing exercise that finally restores his vitality.

The Isneg of the northeast Cordillera are as colorful in their clothes and feasts, as they are fierce in their headhunts. A rite for everyone's well-being gathers on a mat a coconut which also simulates a decapitated head brought in by a victorious *mengal* or headhunter, coconut fronds and flowers, bamboo strips, pots, and chickens. The officiating shaman puts these things in order, and whips the ground and the chickens. The whole community starts dancing in pairs, and then all together. To gongs and other percussion instruments, they spread out their arms with their ubiquitous blankets, slightly turning left and right, lightly swooping around each other, keeping their feet busy with earthy shuffling steps, sometimes skipping.

Addressing the spirits may include all sorts of procedures. In the Umayamnon babaylan dance, a man dresses up as a woman, inasmuch as most babaylan are women, but as man he retains his strength which pleases the gods. With scarves, the babaylan encircles a bush, the symbol of life, where most spirits reside, and utters incantations. This spiritual dimension of life suffuses the indigenous Filipinos' celebrations so that shamanistic dances are found almost everywhere. In the Subanon *buklog*, this becomes clearer when the community itself joins in the act of propitiation and celebration.

Up before sunrise, the men go out to the open field, away from diurnal duties, to raise a sacred building reaching for the clouds. It rises at sunup and is gone by sundown. There will be no trace left of its sturdy and supple strength, no remnant of its cabalistic ceremony—except in the memory of its celebrants. The best wood is chosen for strength, the best bamboo for pliancy, and the best food, rice wine, and incense for efficacy. A baylan chooses the sacred spot where the buklog is to rise; measuring three to four times an adult person's height, it towers out, alone, in the open. The baylan then leads the people and offers food and incense to the spirits. They and the people drink and dance in the manner of their epics and

ancestors. To give thanks for a bountiful harvest, to deflect any illness or misfortune, the Subanon of Zamboanga hold hands, keep a common rhythm, and move as one body in a symbolic circle. The woven bamboo floor bounces up and down. The people keep in step around a central pole called *pathaw* (long pestle) that pounds against a log called *dulugan* (mortar) dug below, sometimes with resonating jars beneath to echo the rhythms of the buklog to the hills and plains. A totemistic support pole looks over the whole ceremony with godly detachment.

To the Subanon, the buklog is an old, old rite, a communal celebration, a now subliminal sexual symbol, an offering to the gods, a spiritual experience. In the epic tale of *Sandayo*, the noble Subanon rose up to the clouds with their servants, who came down again and told of a heaven of gold and light. Their ceremonial buklog is most unique in the land in being held high up on a special yet temporal flooring that must be dismantled by sundown. In the buklog the communal participation is total, as everyone joins in a circular dance, a symbol of their unity as a people and of their union with the divine *diwata* (spirits).

Through these rituals, life is asserted and reasserted—life that is more than the survival and health of the individual and the tribe but includes the balance and fruitfulness of nature. This life then makes possible the birth of more lives, renewing life's length, strength, and meaningfulness in the young.

The Life-cycle Dances

The life of the young is devoutly and joyfully ushered in, nurtured, and promoted. A child's life is so guarded among the Tinguian. In their *gabbok*, one of the subtribes of the Tinguian ritually transfers the health of the elders to the child. A mandadawak examines a pig's bile and other inner parts for a good omen. These are rubbed and crowned on the baby for good health. Then taking up in turns a china bowl, an ax, and a chicken, she dances around with the manalisig. Still dancing and with a spear, she strikes a helpless pig on the ground and then snaps out of her trance.

The Kalinga mark the same rite. Known to be brave and beautiful, feared for the headhunts of the *minger* and admired as the "peacocks of the mountain," the Kalinga keep a couple and their child under a blanket while a shaman chants over them, periodically wiping the couple and their baby. Someone steals the ritual blanket away so that the mandadawak may run after it, shake it, and restore it over the family. Finally, the child is walked around an altar, the shaman and others following with arms and implements that may project their bravery and industry in rice planting.

The Bilaan of Davao and Cotabato are rich in ritual imagination. In their exchange of cradles called *aslolog aban*, held on a mat that is a common ritual object in the south as the blanket is in the north, the parents assure the marriage of their children

earlier on. In their dramatic dance *pandamgo* (dream), a Matigsalug mother imitates the care of her small baby, from bathing to combing her hair. The baby grows up to be a child, a teenager, and finally a marriageable young lady. The mother continues prettifying her and teaching her the use of a slung *malong* (tubular skirt) which seems to symbolize mature responsibilities. Soon two men make their suits with favors represented by beautiful necklaces. The mother takes her choice which the young lady does not favor. There ensues a fight between the suitors, and the mother and daughter end up crying over the deaths of their favored ones. This dance builds up interest as girls in graduated ages playing the daughter come out from behind a screen of malong, while the musicians and dancers play the same rhythms.

If parents care with overdetermination, children nevertheless grow up with fun. But real fun designs its own ritual rules and gameplans. Witness the song-and-dance games of the Muslim youth. Early in life, they are already fastidious in taste, whether they live around the placid Lanao Lake or by the rough Sulu and Celebes Seas. Maranao girls pretend to be mothers themselves by singing and swaying to lullabies. Or they play with boys, as in *pokpok alimpapukok*, until an age when they must seek their separate games (the boys have their own games, like the *sungayan kabaw* or tug-of-war), or just be onlookers. Badjao boys discover graceful agility in the sea with their toy vintas. On reaching a particular age, the Yakan boy's hair is cut in *paggunting*; the boys are ceremoniously made up and weighed in the *pagtimbang*— both for reasons of health. They graduate from Quran reading in the *pagtamat*. Here there are many rituals and gifts.

Up north in the Cordilleras, the Ifugao boys may play with their flat tops or learn the dexterous rhythm of their music and dances, like the *dinnuyya*. Their counterparts among the Bukidnon and Kabanglasan in Mindanao learn the gliding *inagong* and hunting dance.

As distinct a rite of passage as these events are the occasions when girls and boys learn the different dances of their sex. A Matigsalug girl learns to play the boat-shaped *lute* called *kudlong* while marking rhythm with her feet. Rhythmic skill is tested even more among the Tagakaolo in their *udol*, both a resonating log and a dance around it. Bukidnon, Tigwahanon, Matigsalug, and Higaonon girls join adults to learn a range of dances that simulate planting, wave parallel hands to bamboo guitars or *saluray*, display pennantlike fronds or *lukay*, and imitate hawks as in the *banog-banog*. To the Maguindanao girls, *mag-asik* is to dance and a dance is so named. To Francisca Reyes-Aquino, the Tiruray *mag-asik* means to sow, which is just what the Bukidnon girls imitate in their *dugso*, also meaning to dance. To the elaborately adorned and bell-belted Tboli, *kadal* means dance, but it may come in imitation of a bird (*blilah*), a monkey (*iwas*), etc. To the Tausug and Sama, *igal* means rhythmic steps or dance. The *pangalay* means the same, and it comes in different varieties. It is studied by girls and some boys early on for mastery. It is a very restrained but highly articulated form, with a style that has affinity to Balinese, even Thai, classical dance. It may be performed with extended

nails or *janggay* and balanced on supported bamboo poles as in the *pangalay ha pattong*.

Most young men's dances enact a fierce fight or a martial art. Among the Badjao, Tausug, and Sama, the *silat*, also known as *kuntao*, *lima*, *pansak*, belongs to the general and martial *langka*, a gamesome dance. The Badjao learn this out at sea or on a boat where they spend most of their lives. Among the Maranao, the youth is initiated into the *marinaw* which is a precombat chant and ceremony which lead into the full-fledged *sagayan* dance that transforms him into a respectable young man. Like the *sagayan*, the Subanon *soten* supplicates the spirits to give strength and courage to a warrior who shakes a shield and palm leaves. Courtship is enacted by adventurous young men and attractive maidens whenever the Matigsalug play the *saluray* and *kuglong/haglong/faglong*, and sing and dance together. Among the Kalinga, the *gangsá* dominates the rhythm of the *salip* where a roosterlike male swoops around a maiden who as well spreads out her arms wide or keeps them on her hips. He may hold in hand a gift for her.

A similar imitation of two mating fowls obtains in the *manmanok* of the Bago. They use blankets that are spread out with their hands or are kept around the hips. The men seem to scratch the ground, while the women keep shuffling steps close together and to the ground. Again, blankets enlarge the movements of the *takik* of the Ibaloy with hands held up and flicking with percussive accents. The nearby Gaddang of Nueva Vizcaya dance out a similar rooster-and-hen courtship in *bumbuak*, without the usual blankets but with active hands and shuffling, skipping steps.

Even more gamesome is the Maguindanao chase-and-run through several malong held up by friends. Surprising is the dance of the lovers performed inside one such malong in which dancers strike symmetrical poses. The malong also serves as a whip against intruders in the danced liaison. Flirtatious but bolder are the *salok* or scooping hand gesture of the old, old *pantomina* in Bicol, which is still danced by the marginalized Abiyan. More sedate is the *dalling-dalling* of the Tausug (from the English word "darling") also called *pagsangbay*. A dance that displays grace as much as affection, it is considered a courtship dance, especially when done in pairs.

Among the Yakan, a young man has to dress up fastidiously to visit a girl. In the negotiation for marriage called *muatangan*, the whole community is involved. The man is borne on the shoulders, bringing the dowries. On the final day, the man rides a horse and is shaded with an umbrella. The wedding itself called *pagkawin* is long and complex, with the bride and groom heavily made up. The groom offers food to his bride and puts a scarf of cloth on his seated bride's shoulders. Flirtatiously but demurely she rejects all these several times but finally accepts. In their sumptuous makeup and colorful headdresses and *sabláy*, the couple finally dances in the schooled style of the *pindulas*.

Pagkawin is also the name of the Badjao wedding which is celebrated on a boat, with maidens dancing by the bride's side as the *kulintangan*, *agong*, and the tambourine-looking *dambara* play. As in the Yakan rite, a datu or imam officiates and covers the groom's hand and his own (with their thumbs "kissing") with a ceremonial cloth. To finalize the relationship, they both hold the bride's head.

In *kasal sa banig*, the Bagobo go through the exchanges of food and chewing of betel by a stream. The couple is made to incline their heads and their hair is wound together. Similarly, the *kawin* of the Manobo includes the exchange of food, plus the sacrifice of a pig on which the groom and bride ritually place their feet. In the end they both step over the pig. General festivity follows.

Food is again exchanged in the Matigsalug's *paasawauy* where there is an exchange of gifts between the bridal parties. The groom's thigh is placed over the bride's while they are seated on a mat. The datu talks to the couple about marital obligations and finally makes them stand back to back with their heads together. Again marriage is negotiated on a mat among the Bilaan. In their *samsung* the parents negotiate over the dowry, much coming from the groom's side (prized gongs, jewelry, implements, etc.). There is also an exchange of verbal chants and of *kampilan* called *falimac*. From the bride's side a tinalak cloth is given to the groom's parents to clarify that she had not been "bought." Finally, the groom is urged to put a foot on his bride's shoulder, while the hesitant bride does the same, maybe with a provocative shove. Then they dance and everyone else follows. In their tinalak clothes, headscarves, and jewelry, the people dance to the *tangungo* gongs and the perpetual tinkle of women's belt-bells.

A most interesting marital arrangement is made in the *pig-agawan* of the Talaandig. Here, three maidens attract the attention of one man (the group has more women than men), with their tall feathered combs, bead jewelry, and embroidered scarves. Dancing all along, the man plays the role of the prized and fickle one, teasing each maiden as his or not his choice. After the women have taken turns shoving each other, the man finally chooses by laying his kris on one of the women's scarves. Similarly, the *karasaguyon* of the fastidious Tboli of Cotabato also provokes the women to preen themselves up endlessly and fight over a man who makes a choice for his fifth wife. These women are preferably sisters and cousins of his first wife, and they may be as young as 10 or 11 years of age.

After performing their own courtship dance called *talip* where the man lures a woman with an attractive blanket to place on her shapely shoulders, the Ifugao celebrate the *intaneg* or wedding with the festival dance called *dinnuyya*. In the presence of a mumbaki drinking ceremonial wine, the bride is dressed with the *dong-dong* and the groom with the horned *kango* on their heads.

In most ethnic groups, mourning is communally observed with song and dance. The Tinguian will have three to four women representing their villages and relations to the dead conversing over the victim; in the part called *sangsang-it*,

they sing over their dead. The Abiyan will dance around the grave in the *lidong*. Young and old will do the same in the *say-ang*. In the *monghimong*, the Ifugao men turn up in mass at the burial of a murdered tribe member, bouncing up and down in rhythm on one or two feet. Wearing white headdresses from betel-nut palm, crowned with red *dongla* leaves, some carry a spear in hand or two. The rest carry the death sticks called *bangibang* which they beat in strict syncopation. These used to be stained with their enemies' blood, now only with carabao or chicken blood. Their dead, seated and addressed by the living, is fetched at noon so that when he acts in revenge it will also be as clear and bright. In the *udol* of the Tagakaolo, the women lure back their men from battle by dancing around and beating a musical log called *udol*. This log is pounded, as belts and anklets with bells are shaken for the spirits to hear. The smoke of *kamangyan* (incense) also leads the spirits to find their way back home. This call of the grieving women can last for days.

The Occupational Dances

Life in the ethnic communities is characterized by a variety of activities relating to livelihood or defense. These activities are joyfully celebrated in mime and dance. Most common to the varied ethnic cultures of the Philippines is the transformation of the rice cycle into dance. The Bilaan, for instance, act out a whole sequence, from men choosing and clearing a field, to women bringing food, the men digging the ground with poles, the women sowing seeds from their baskets, and finally, harvesting to a more leisurely rhythm of the *haglong* and *gongs*. The same is done by the Bukidnon with their *tudak* (digging poles), seed and harvest baskets, and pestles for pounding—all to the accompaniment of the same musical instruments and an open-mouthed bamboo *kalatong*. The Talaandig of northern Mindanao also enact the same planting style in their *tudak*, while the Aeta of Zambales, in their own manner, dance out the planting of gabi in *mangbutot*.

Being hunters, many tribal peoples create actions appropriate to the object of the hunt—a bird, a beehive, a frog, or fish. The *lakulak* (frogs) are the imaginary objects of the hunt in the Matigsalug *panulo*. A man dances this out with his bolo, while a woman attends with a basket to store his takings. Similarly, an Aeta of Pampanga, boy or man, dances out much of his life, like in the traditional *talipi*, or a situation where he is attacked by bees as in the *pinapanilan*.

Fishing itself is very much around in this archipelago of islands and lakes. The Bilaan dramatically mime and dance out the *amti* with fish traps, prepare a plant's poison to daze their catch, build a fire for their meal, and mark the rhythm with their bodies, even as they crawl or are up on their busy feet. Danger and defeat can engulf a tribe's life and they have to put up a fight. Again, these are not just valiantly met but creatively danced out. Dancing gives courage before (and after) a battle and relieves if not actually transforms grief.

In the *kalasag*, the Matigsalug enact a combat with shields and spears. The dance is full of hops, skips, and vibratory hand movements with a spear. With outspread

arms their movements are birdlike. As alert if not more is the *pangayaw* of the Talaandig, full of extrovert runs and chases, falling on knees, and clashing of shields. These same implements are used in the Yakan *tumahik*. The combatant-dancer's feet are as frenetic as the beaten music. But the shields are round. Round and elongated shields are contrastingly used by opposing camps in the Cuyunon *sinulog*. Found in the island of Cuyo and smaller surrounding islets in the Visayas, the Cuyunon paint their faces in this dance, but they carry no swords or spears. In the *mangayaw*, the Ikalahan of Nueva Vizcaya and nearby provinces, subtly shift weights and simply go around carrying their small shields and spears or bolo. Former headhunters (mainly against the brave Ilongot of the region), they have a story of how a monkey joined the victors and their dance has since been called *tayaw in tadaw* (dance of the monkey). The Kalinga also go into headhunts in their *kayaw*. They watch out for an *idaw* bird and consult a mumbaki or shaman. A good omen leads them into a mock-war dance. On the other hand, a victory calls for the crowning of the mingers (those returning with head-trophies) with feathered headdresses called *lawi*.

Epilogue

Rites and dances are still being performed because they serve the belief and social systems of the ethnic Filipinos. If life is deemed hard, these rites and dances give expression and solace to their needs, sometimes give them courage and determination. These rites and dances are revived by action and movements, and by the motives and spirits that inspire or require them.

Art is a means of coping. In its basic function, art deals with the actualities and problems of existence. Making baskets, for instance, deals with the need to store seeds for eating and planting. Weaving cloth is for the purpose of providing a second protective skin. Making arms helps men to meet a challenge that has to be confronted. Yet baskets, clothes, and arms, when made by the tribes, have not remained crude but have, in fact, no matter how raw the materials, produced visual feasts that more than satisfy need. In like manner, being born, growing up, getting married, working and fighting to live, and dealing with grief have not only been coped with. They have been staged and are still staged in rites and dances that go beyond mere survival.

More than just filling the external and internal (psychological and spiritual) needs, these rites and dances are in fact modes of celebration. They themselves are facts of life, and are more than just modes of symbolization. They are as real as cloth, baskets, and arms—artifacts that cannot be kept in museums or between book covers, not even in the two-dimensional films. They are of celebrations in their actual form and fun. They are a dimension of life itself, and life is incomplete, unintelligible, and unexciting without them. Indeed, celebration ties up all sorts of dances, which sometimes defy scholarly classification.

The rediscovery of ethnic materials in their pristine liveliness brings its own

refreshing excitement to the modern eyes. Avid folkarts researchers find endless pleasure in unearthing forms and permutations in shapes, sounds, steps, and senses that reveal the prodigious imagination of the ethnic people. With their costumes and instruments, rites and dances also provide substance to present-day documentation and presentation. The success of many folkdance troupes have for the most part rested not only on their fidelity but also on their creative approach to tribal crafts and customs.

The full-evening *Filipinescas: Philippine Life, Legend and Lore in Dance* of National Artist Leonor Orosa-Goquingco and the wide repertoire of the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company staged by National Artist Lucrecia Reyes-Urtula brim with ethnic materials from tribal folkways. The unflagging research drive and assiduity of Ramon Obusan have kept vibrant and vital his folkloric group's repertoire, classified into published and unpublished dances of the Philippines.

Agnes Locsin uses the term "neo-ethnic" to suggest the transformation of indigenous rites and dances for the contemporary stage. She has recently intensified this creative procedure in her innovative, and sometimes controversial *Igorot*, 1987; *Bagobo* and *Muslim*, both in 1990; *Moriones* and *Hinilawod*, both in 1991; and *Encantada* (Enchantress), 1992. Earlier works had used ethnic inspiration, like Benjamin (Villanueva) Reyes' *Alamat* (Legend), 1976; Eddie Elejar's Maranao Maguindanao-based *Katakata sin Rajah Indarapatra* (Stories of Rajah Indarapatra), 1968, later expanded in *Juru-Pakal* (The Enchanted Kris), 1971, and his *Kapinangan*, 1972; Julie Borromeo's *Babae at Lalake* (Woman and Man) and *Kalingan*, 1968, and *Bamboo Fantasy and Philippine Revue*, 1986; Felicitas Layag Radaic's Igorot-based *Nan-Pangkat*, 1975; Alice Reyes' *At a Maranaw Gathering*, 1970, *Dugso*, 1972, *Rajah Sulayman*, 1975, *Tales of the Manuvu*, 1977, and *Rama, Hari* (King Rama), 1980; Luis Layag's *La Mora*; Gener Caringal's *Ang Sultan* (The Sultan), 1973, *Tomaneg at Aniway* (Tomaneg and Aniway), 1975, and *Labaw Dunggon*, 1985; Corazon Generoso-Iñigo's *Lam-ang*, 1974; Ester Rimpos' *Duo*, 1977; and Eric Cruz's *Cañao*, 1980. Like Cruz, Eli Jacinto has used his experience in jazz and modern dance with a folkdance group in his own contemporized Filipino dances.

Ironically, living abroad has inevitably drawn Filipino choreographers back to their ethnic roots, as evident in Basilio's *Morang Tarjata*, 1974 (done in collaboration with Reynaldo Alejandro in New York), *Mosque Baroque*, 1975, *Paglalang* (Creation), 1983, *Sa Baybayon* (By the Seashore), 1986, the dance drama *Ang Babaylan* (The Shaman), 1988, with director Edward Defensor, and *Oriental Fantasy*, 1990. Joy Coronel's long stay in New York drew her to ethnic forms and themes in *Salip*, *Yakan*, *Muslim*, and *Kulintang*, in the same manner that Kristin Jackson dealt with a Kalinga ritual in *Kolias*, 1984. Even before she left for the United States, Denisa Reyes staged *Arem*, 1975, in Manila, transformed into *Ifugaos* in New York. Later she did her trancelike *For the Gods*, 1985.

Like so many Filipinos living and running their creative folkloric troupes in

America, Alleluia Panis in San Francisco bases her choreographic presentations on Philippine folk and ethnic dances. Folkloric groups abroad assert and project Filipino identity in this transformational manner. In the Philippines, folk troupes continue to dig into their folkways and, significantly since the 1970s, to focus on their regional and provincial grounds and resources.

Despite some thoughtless and uncreative transformations, these contemporary researchers, choreographers, and companies recreate and even revitalize indigenous materials for the modern and urban audiences. • B.E.S. Villaruz and R.A. Obusan

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