



Filipino Martial Arts

Digest

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We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

I have always been ready for a good story. So in this Special Edition I have gathered some Myths and Folklore from the Philippines.

Quoted from Dr. Damiana Eugenio, a renowned Filipina folklorist, says there is still no universally accepted definition of the word "folklore". But any bit of knowledge handed down from generation to generation, which describes or depicts the beliefs and lifestyle of the ancestors of a chosen ethnic group, is rendered unique to that group, and is respected as folklore.

Folklore is usually transmitted by word of mouth. Oral traditions are very common among the indigenous tribes still existent in the Philippines. What students of folk literature do, basically, is transcribe and interpret what is related to them by the storytellers of a tribe. The preservation of the knowledge of our elders can be carried out in many ways, and they are not inaccessible to anyone who would seek them.

Recently, interest in folklore seems to have diminished. With the swift pace of modern living, looking back at our roots through spyglasses such as the study of folklore seems more and more difficult, if not pointless. The Filipino youth, especially, are more concerned with looking forward as the rest of the world hastens toward a technological future. We do not want to be left behind, after all. But if we were never meant to look back, why does the ancient saying "Ang siyang di lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay di makararating sa paroroonan (Whoever does not look back at a starting point, will not arrive at a destination)" remain in our lips? Why do we remind ourselves of the necessity of stopping to pay respect to our forebears and the advice they could still give?

Visit Dr. Damiana Eugenio website at: **folklore.philsites.net**. There you will find some great pieces on myths and legends, fables, tales of the supernatural, heroic tales, and tales of laughter.

So I hope you will enjoy this Special Edition.

Maraming Salamat Po

Philippine mythology and folklore include a collection of tales and superstitions about magical creatures and entities. Some Filipinos, even though heavily Westernized and Christianized, still believe in such entities. The prevalence of belief in the figures of Philippine mythology is strong in the provinces.

Because the country has many islands and is inhabited by different ethnic groups, Philippine mythology and superstitions are very diverse. However, certain similarities exist among these groups, such as the belief in Heaven (*kaluwalhatian*, *kalangitan*), Hell (*impierno*, *kasanaan*), and the human soul (*kaluluwa*).

How the World Was Made

By John Maurice Miller

This is the ancient Filipino account of the creation.

Thousands of years ago there was no land nor sun nor moon nor stars, and the world was only a great sea of water, above which stretched the sky. The water was the kingdom of the god Maguayan, and the sky was ruled by the great god Captan.

Maguayan had a daughter called Lidagat, the sea, and Captan had a son known as Lihangin, the wind. The gods agreed to the marriage of their children, so the sea became the bride of the wind. Three sons and a daughter were born to them. The sons were called Licalibutan, Liadlao, and Libulan; and the daughter received the name of Lisuga.

Licalibutan had a body of rock and was strong and brave; Liadlao was formed of gold and was always happy; Libulan was made of copper and was weak and timid; and the beautiful Lisuga had a body of pure silver and was sweet and gentle. Their parents were very fond of them, and nothing was wanting to make them happy.

After a time Lihangin died and left the control of the winds to his eldest son Licalibutan. The faithful wife Lidagat soon followed her husband, and the children, now grown up, were left without father or mother. However, their grandfathers, Captan and Maguayan, took care of them and guarded them from all evil.

After a time, Licalibutan, proud of his power over the winds, resolved to gain more power, and asked his brothers to join him in an attack on Captan in the sky above. At first they refused; but when Licalibutan became angry with them, the amiable Liadlao, not wishing to offend his brother, agreed to help. Then together they induced the timid Libulan to join in the plan.

When all was ready the three brothers rushed at the sky, but they could not beat down the gates of steel that guarded the entrance. Then Licalibutan let loose the strongest winds and blew the bars in every direction. The brothers rushed into the opening, but were met by the angry god Captan. So terrible did he look that they turned and ran in terror; but Captan, furious at the destruction of his gates, sent three bolts of lightning after them.

The first struck the copper Libulan and melted him into a ball. The second struck the golden Liadlao, and he too was melted. The third bolt struck Licalibutan, and his rocky body broke into many pieces and fell into the sea. So huge was he that parts of his body stuck out above the water and became what is known as land.

In the meantime the gentle Lisuga had missed her brothers and started to look for them. She went toward the sky, but as she approached the broken gates, Captan, blind

with anger, struck her too with lightning, and her silver body broke into thousands of pieces.

Captan then came down from the sky and tore the sea apart, calling on Maguayan to come to him and accusing him of ordering the attack on the sky. Soon Maguayan appeared and answered that he knew nothing of the plot as he had been asleep far down in the sea.

After a time he succeeded in calming the angry Captan. Together they wept at the loss of their grandchildren, especially the gentle and beautiful Lisuga; but with all their power they could not restore the dead to life. However, they gave to each body a beautiful light that will shine forever.

And so it was that golden Liadlao became the sun, and copper Libulan the moon, while the thousands of pieces of silver Lisuga shine as the stars of heaven. To wicked Licalibutan the gods gave no light, but resolved to make his body support a new race of people. So Captan gave Maguayan a seed, and he planted it on the land, which, as you will remember, was part of Licalibutan's huge body.

Soon a bamboo tree grew up, and from the hollow of one of its branches a man and a woman came out. The man's name was Sicalac, and the woman was called Sicabay. They were the parents of the human race. Their first child was a son whom they called Libo; afterwards they had a daughter who was known as Saman. Pandaguan was a younger son and he had a son called Arion.

Pandaguan was very clever and invented a trap to catch fish. The very first thing he caught was a huge shark. When he brought it to land, it looked so great and fierce that he thought it was surely a god, and he at once ordered his people to worship it. Soon all gathered around and began to sing and pray to the shark. Suddenly the sky and sea opened, and the gods came out and ordered Pandaguan to throw the shark back into the sea and to worship none but them.

All were afraid except Pandaguan. He grew very bold and answered that the shark was as big as the gods, and that since he had been able to overpower it he would also be able to conquer the gods. Then Captan, hearing this, struck Pandaguan with a small thunderbolt, for he did not wish to kill him but merely to teach him a lesson. Then he and Maguayan decided to punish these people by scattering them over the earth, so they carried some to one land and some to another. Many children were afterwards born, and thus the earth became inhabited in all parts.

Pandaguan did not die. After lying on the ground for thirty days he regained his strength, but his body was blackened from the lightning, and all his descendants ever since that day have been black.

His first son, Arion, was taken north, but as he had been born before his father's punishment he did not lose his color, and all his people therefore are white. Libo and Saman were carried south, where the hot sun scorched their bodies and caused all their descendants to be of a brown color.

A son of Saman and a daughter of Sicalac were carried east, where the land at first was so lacking in food that they were compelled to eat clay. On this account their children and their children's children have always been yellow in color.

And so the world came to be made and peopled. The sun and moon shine in the sky, and the beautiful stars light up the night. All over the land, on the body of the

envious Licalibutan, the children of Sicalac and Sicabay have grown great in numbers. May they live forever in peace and brotherly love!

How the Moon and the Stars Came to Be

Bukidnon (Mindanao)

By Mabel Cook Cole

One day in the times when the sky was close to the ground a spinster went out to pound rice. Before she began her work, she took off the beads from around her neck and the comb from her hair, and hung them on the sky, which at that time looked like coral rock.

Then she began working, and each time that she raised her pestle into the air it struck the sky. For some time she pounded the rice, and then she raised the pestle so high that it struck the sky very hard.

Immediately the sky began to rise, and it went up so far that she lost her ornaments. Never did they come down, for the comb became the moon and the beads are the stars that are scattered about.

The Flood Story - Igorot

Once upon a time, when the world was flat and there were no mountains, there lived two brothers, sons of Lumawig, the Great Spirit. The brothers were fond of hunting, and since no mountains had formed there was no good place to catch wild pig and deer, and the older brother said, "Let us cause water to flow over all the world and cover it, and then mountains will rise up."

So they caused water to flow over all the earth, and when it was covered they took the head-basket [a bamboo basket, in which the heads of victims are kept prior to the head-taking celebration] of the town and set it for a trap. The brothers were very much pleased when they went to look at their trap, for they had caught not only many wild pigs and deer, but also many people.

Now Lumawig looked down from his place in the sky and saw that his sons had flooded the earth and that in all the world there was just one spot which was not covered. And he saw that all the people in the world had been drowned except one brother and sister who lived in Pokis.

Then Lumawig descended, and he called to the boy and girl, saying, "Oh, you are still alive." "Yes," answered the boy, "we are still alive, but we are very cold."

So Lumawig commanded his dog and deer to get fire for the boy and girl. The dog and the deer swam quickly away, but though Lumawig waited a long time they did not return, and all the time the boy and girl were growing colder.

Finally Lumawig himself went after the dog and the deer, and when he reached them he said, "Why are you so long in bringing the fire to Pokis? Get ready and come quickly while I watch you, for the boy and girl are very cold."

Then the dog and the deer took the fire and started to swim through the flood, but when they had gone only a little way, the fire was put out. Lumawig commanded them to get more fire and they did so, but they swam only a little way again when that of the deer went out, and that of the dog would have been extinguished also had not Lumawig gone quickly to him and taken it.

As soon as Lumawig reached Pokis he built a big fire which warmed the brother and sister; and the water evaporated so that the world was as it was before, except that now there were mountains. The brother and sister married and had children, and thus there came to be many people on the earth.

When the Lilies Return

Retold by: John M. Miller
(Pasig Metro Manila, Luzon)

At the time when the Pasig River flowed peacefully along between flowery banks, when its breast was not torn by puffing steamers, and when only a few clustering huts marked the present site of Manila, there grew on the banks of the river, a beautiful field of lilies. The lilies glistened like silver in the sunlight and filled the air with delicious perfume. No hand plucked them from the earth, and no foot trampled out their fragrance; for an ancient prophecy had said that while the lilies stood the happiness of the people should endure.

But after a time came dark days in the history of the Philippines. Yellow hordes swept across the water and carried all before them. The people could hardly expect to resist the invaders, for their warrior king, Loku, had profaned the word of the god, who, in the form of a lizard, was fulfilling his threats of punishment. Their armies were weak and scattered, and the conquerors marched on in triumph. As report after report of disaster reached Luzon, the people trembled for the safety of their fair land. Warriors gathered hastily for the defense of the nation, and all united and waited for the enemy to appear.

One day the water was dotted with the junks of the invaders. They came slowly down the bay, and anchored near the mouth of the Pasig. Then from the boat poured the yellow warriors. Spears rained upon them, stones and arrows laid them low, but their numbers were countless. The people were along the riverbanks. Fiercely they fought, but numbers told against them. Foot by foot they were pressed back, till they stood on the border of the field of lilies, where they made their last stand. But it was to no purpose. The invaders poured from the ships, and in one desperate charge drove back the ranks of the people, who fought and died among their sacred lilies. All through the night the battle raged, and all daybreak, when the victorious invaders rested on their spears, the beautiful field was no more.

The lilies were crushed and torn. The bodies of dead and dying warriors laid everywhere, and the crushed flowers were stained with blood of friend and foe. The peace of the land was lost.

Many years have passed since then. New races have come to the islands, and new manners and customs have been introduced. The Pasig still flows on to the sea, but its

banks are harness by bridges. Lofty dwellings and stores took the place of the little huts, and a great city marks the site of the little village. Where once was the beautiful field is now a busy part of the great city. It is called Quiapo, after the lilies. Many of the older people remember the prophecy and wonder if the lilies will ever return.

The land is now a peaceful and contented one. Comfort and happiness maybe found among its inhabitants. Perhaps the fair, strange women from the great land over the sea are the lilies. Who can tell?

The Legend of Lake Ticob

Retold by: Nita Umali-Berthelsen
(Quezon Province, Southern Luzon)

In one of the lesser-known barrios of Quezon Province in Southern Luzon, there lies a small, clear lake, beautiful in shape like a gem set in the middle of an emerald circlet. It is said that on clear days one can see the depths of this lake and distinguish four posts. And on still nights if one is very quiet, one may see crocodiles come up to the and quietly sleep under the moonlight.

The people who have live around the lake say that many, many years ago there was no water in the place. A small house where an elderly couple lived stood on the spot where the lake is now. Although happy in their love for each other, the man and his wife had one sorrow-that in there advanced age they still had no child. Finally his wife, who had about given up all hope, received an answer to all her prayers and one day gave her husband the good news. "I dreamed I would be with child son, a daughter. She shall come on the ninth moon. There is only one thing. The gods who will give us this child have commanded that she shall never stop out of our house or misfortune will befall us.

In their joy at the arrival of the child, little did the couple think of the latter part of her dream. It did not take long before the dream came true, and the baby was bouncing on its father's knee. The couple could hardly contain their joy. As the years passed, they saw that not only did they have an obedient, diligent daughter whom they, however, always reminded never to set foot outside their door, but that they also had a beautiful child. In time suitors came to ask of her hand, but too young to understand what love meant, she laughed off her admirer's extravagant words. One day while her parents were in the field working on the soil that gave them their livelihood, one of these suitors came. He have been dared by his other friends who were quite certain that the damsel would never consider his suit. "Why, you can't even make her come down from her house," they mocked him. Stung by their remarks, he promised that he could do at least that.

He found the maiden sitting by the window, finishing a piece of embroidery on a pillowcase. When he came, she offered him a seat and settled back to her sewing. "Can't you leave your work for a minute?" asked the young man, wondering at her unusual diligence. She smiled in apology. "I cannot today. This works is expected to be finished this afternoon. My mother will deliver it to the lady who ordered the embroidery. She will not forgive me if she comes home with the work unfinished."

Silently the man watched her, seeing in her explanation a way of realizing his plans. He did not waste time. After the girl finished the length of thread and was reaching

for some more, he brushed his hand against the needle lying on the windowsill and sent the silver of steel falling down to the ground. The girl exclaimed in consternation and then asked the suitor to go down and get it. Apparently willing, he hurriedly found the needle, reached it up to her, and then, suddenly playful, urged her to come to the door and reach down for it.

Without thinking, the girl did as he asked, her arm stretched out, her feet remaining inside the door. But the man backed away, and she had to go forward. "Come on, take a step down," he cajoled. She did. He backed away again, and she had to take another step down the stairway. As she did so faint rumbling could be heard, and it grew louder with every downward step she took. Too frightened to think that it was her descent that could be the cause of the noise, the girl hurried to the man, but no sooner had her feet touched the ground than water came rushing down, covering them and the whole house.

The parents, having heard the noise, came and they too were enveloped by water. But the gods, punishing them, still gave them life and changed the four people into crocodiles. That is why, it is said. The crocodiles in Lake Ticob have always been tame and at one time they even played with the children who romped around the beach. And when fishermen rowed on the lake, the crocodiles swam around the boats and never harmed human beings.

But one day, just a few years ago, a stranger who did not know that the crocodiles in the lake were human, shot one of them. Only then did the crocodiles turn unfriendly, and although they still do not kill people, they no longer play with children. This legend explains how some things came about in Lanao.

The Legend of Maria Makiling

Retold by: Dr. Jose P. Rizal



Mt. Makiling

The many legends of Mariang Makiling tell of a young woman who lived on the beautiful mountain that separates the provinces of Laguna and Tayabas. Her dwelling place was never definitely known, because those who had the good luck to deal with her would wander about for a long time lost in the woods, unable to return; neither did they remember the way, nor were they agreed as to the place and its description.

While some say her home was a beautiful palace, bright as a golden reliquary, surrounded by gardens and fine parks, others assert that they saw only wretched hut with a patched roof and bamboo sides. Such a contradiction may give rise to the belief that both parties were romancing, it is true; but it may also be due to the fact that Mariang Makiling, like many persons in comfortable circumstances, might have had two dwelling places.

According to eyewitness, she was a young woman, tall and graceful with big black eyes and long and abundant hair. Her color was a clear pure brown, the *kayumangging kaligatan*, as the Tagalog say. Her hands and feet were small and delicate and the expression of her countenance always grave and serious.

She was a fantastic creature, half nymph, halves sylph, born under the moonbeams of Filipinas, in the mystery of its ancient woods, to the murmur of the waves on the neighboring shore. According to general belief, and contrary to the reputation imputed to the nymphs and goddesses, Mariang Makiling always remained pure, simple, and mysterious as the genius of the mountain. An old maid servant we had, an Amazon who defended her house against the outlaws and once killed once of them with a lance thrust, assured me that she had in her childhood seen her passing in the distance over the reed grass so lightly and airily that she did not even make the flexible blades bend.

They said that on the night of Good Friday, when the hunters build bonfires to attract the deer by the scent of the ashes of which these animals are so fond, they have discerned her motionless on the brink of the most fearful abysses, letting her long hair float in the wind, all flooded with the moonlight. Then she would salute them ceremoniously, pass on, and disappear amid the shadows of the neighboring trees.

Generally every one love and respected her and no one ever dared to question her, to follow, or to watch her. She has also been seen seated for long periods upon a cliff beside a river, as though watching the gentle currents of the stream. There was an old hunter who claimed to have seen her bathing in a secluded fountain at midnight, when the cicadas themselves were asleep, when the moon reigned in the midst of silence, and nothing disturbed the charm of solitude. In those same hours and under the same circumstances was the time when the mysterious and melancholy notes of her harp might be heard. Persons who heard them stopped, for they drew away and became hushed when any attempt was made to follow them up.

Her favorable time for appearing, it is said, was after a storm. Then she would be seen scurrying over the fields and whenever she passed, life, order, and calm were renewed; the trees again straightened up their overthrown trunks, and all traces of the unchained elements were wiped away.

When the poor country folk on the slopes of Makiling needed clothing or jewels for the solemn occasions of life, she would lend them and besides, give her a pullet white as milk, one that had never laid an egg, a *dumalaga*, as they say. Mariang Makiling was very charitable and had a good heart. Now often has she not, in the guise of a simple country maid, aided poor old women who went to the woods for firewood or to pick wild fruits, by slipping among the latter nuggets of gold, coins, and jewels. A hunter who was one day chasing a wild boar through the tall grass and thorny bushes of the thickets came suddenly upon a hut in which the animal hid.

Soon a beautiful young woman issued from the hut and said to him gently: "The wild boar belongs to me and you have done wrong to chase it. But I see that you are very tired; your arms and legs are covered with blood. So come in and eat, and then you may go on your way."

Confused and startled, and besides charmed by the beauty of the young woman, the man went in and ate mechanically everything she offered him, without being able to speak a single word. Before he left, the young woman gave him some pieces of ginger, charging him to give them to his wife for her cooking. The hunter put them inside the

crown of his broad hat and after thanking her, withdrew in content. On the way home, he felt his hat becoming heavy so he took out many of the pieces and threw them away. But what was his surprise and regret when the next day he discovered that what he had taken to be ginger was solid gold, bright as a ray of sunshine. Although he tried to look for them later, he could never find even one.

But for many years now, Mariang Makiling's presence has not been manifested on Makiling. Her vapory figure no longer wanders through the deep valleys or hovers over the waterfalls on the serene moonlight nights. The melancholy tone of her mysterious harp is no longer heard, and now lovers get married without receiving from her jewels and other presents, many fear that she has disappeared forever, or at least, she avoids any contact with mankind.

Yet on the side of the mountain, there is a clear, quiet pool, and the legend persists that her vapory figure may still be seen reflected in this pool in the mists of early dawn, and from time to time people to the countryside go to watch for her there.

Legend of the Firefly

Lovely little creatures, glittering, sparkling, throwing fragments of light in the dark night skies. How did the fireflies or alitaptap come about?

Once, a long time ago, in the valley of Pinak in Central Luzon, one of the islands in the Philippines. There was a deep large lake rich with fish. There, the people of Pinak fished for their food, and always, there was plenty for all. Then suddenly, the big river dried up. In the shallow mud, there wasn't a fish to catch. For months, there were no rains. Out in the fields, the land turned dry. The rice-stalks slowly withered. Everywhere in Pinak, there was hunger. Night after night, the people of Pinak prayed hard.

"Dear Bathala," they would recite together in their small and poorly-built chapel, "send us rains, give us food to eat. For the people are starving, and there is want among us!"

Then one black and starless night, the good Bathala answered the prayers of the faithful people of Pinak. For suddenly up in the dark skies appeared a blaze of gold! A beautiful chariot of gold was zooming thru the sky. The people started to panic but a big booming voice came from the chariot soothing them with words.

"I am Bulan-hari, and I have come with my wife, Bitu-in. We are sent to the heavens to rule Pinak from now on. We have come to give you good life!" As Bulan-hari spoke, the black skies burst open. The rain fell in torrents. Soon the dry fields bloomed again. The large lake rose and once again was filled with fish. The people were happy once more under the rulership of Bulan-hari.

Soon Bulan-hari and Bitu-in had a daughter. She grew up to be a beautiful maiden. Such long dark hair! Such lovely eyes under long curling lashes! Her nose was chiselled fine. Her lips like rosebuds. Her skin was soft and fair like cream. They named her Alitaptap for on her forehead was a bright sparkling star.

All the young, brave handsome men of Pinak fell in love with Alitaptap. They worshipped her beauty. They sang songs of love beneath her windows. They all sought to win her heart.

But alas! The heart of Alitaptap wasn't human. She was the daughter of Bulan-hari and Bitu-in, who burst from the sky and were not of the earth. She had a heart of

stone, as cold and as hard as the sparkling star on her forehead. Alitaptap would never know love.

Then one day, an old woman arrived at the palace. Her hair long and dirty her clothing tattered and soiled. Before the king Bulan-hari, Balo-na, the old, wise woman whined in her sharp voice... that she had come from her dwelling in the mountains to bear the king sad news. The news being that she saw the future in a dream and it betold of their fate... the warriors of La-ut are coming with their mighty swords to conquer the land, the only solution is to have a marriage between Alitaptap and one of the young men, so as to have a heir to win the war.

At once Bulan-hari pleaded with his daughter to choose one of the young men in their village. But how could the beautiful maiden understand? Alitaptap's heart of stone merely stood in silence. Bulan-hari gripped his sword in despair... "Alitapatap!" he bellowed in the quiet palace, "You will follow me, or you will lay dead this very minute!"

But nothing could stir the lovely young woman's heart. Bulan-hari blind with anger and fear of the dark future finally drew his sword. Clang! The steel of his sword's blade rang in the silence of the big palace. It hit the star on Alitaptap's lovely forehead!

The star burst! Darkness was everywhere! Until a thousand chips of glitter and light flew around the hall. Only the shattered pieces of the star on Alitaptap's forehead lighted the great hall, flickering as though they were stars with tiny wings.

Alitaptap, the lovely daughter from the heavens lay dead.

And soon, Balo-na's prediction had come true. Riding in stamping wild horses, the warriors of La-ut came like the rumble and clashes of lightning and thunder. They killed the people of Pinak, ruined crops, and poisoned the lake. They spread sorrow and destruction everywhere.

When it all ended, the beautiful, peaceful valley of Pinak had turned into an empty and shallow swamp. At night, there was nothing but darkness. But soon, tiny sparkles of light would flicker and lend glimmers of brightness in the starless night.

And so, the fireflies came about. Once, a long time ago, they were fragments from the star on the forehead of Bulan-hari's daughter, the beautiful Alitaptap.

The Legend of Marinduque

Retold by: Alfonso P. Santos
(Marinduque, Southern Luzon)

In a small island kingdom there once lived a very beautiful princess. She was nicknamed Maring. Her favorite haunt was the top of a very tall mountain, Mount Malindig. She was very fond of hunting wild animals, a diversion which was much against her father's wish. One day she espied a pretty white deer. It ran so swiftly that it took her a long time to catch up with it. She had the game already at bay when the owner came along looking for it. The stranger was a man of princely bearing and fine manners. He introduced himself as Duque and the deer to her as offered a token of their first meeting. Maring could not resist his gallant gesture. She could not help admiring the stranger, who fell in love with her at first sight. Since that day they often met in the forest. The beauty of Maring was known far and wide. Innumerable suitors came to woo

her, but she turned a deaf ear to them all, for she had set her heart on the modest Duque. Not knowing about her secret love affair, her royal father announced that her hand would be given to the one who would win a ship race. So the most persistent suitors, three wealthy kings, fitted out vessels for the contest. Duque could not participate. He was not rich enough to equip a vessel.

Meanwhile, Maring was very unhappy. She prayed to the gods for help. Bathala heard her prayers. On the appointed day, the sky grew suddenly dark. The sea seethed turbulently and the winds blew furiously, but the contest could not be put off for another day. The three kings set forth bravely on their ships. Before they were halfway to the goal, one of them hit a rock and soon vanished from sight with his ship. The second vessel was able to move on a little farther and then it was also devoured by the angry sea. The last ship met the same fate. The king and the spectators grieved over the fate of the three royal suitors. Only Maring did not feel grieved at the outcome of the race. When the sea calmed down, everyone was surprised to see three islands at the places where the ship had sunk. They were named Tres Reyes, or Three Kings, after the unlucky trio. The father of Maring did not wish to sacrifice more lives after that disaster. He gave his daughter freedom to choose her husband. So she confessed to him her secret love. The king consented to the marriage. Seven days of feasting and merrymaking followed. To mark the happy union of the two young people, the island kingdom was named Marinduque, after Maring and Duque.

Legend of the Dama de Noche

A thousand years ago, there was a rich maharlika, or nobleman, who spent his early bachelor days recklessly, wining and dining in the company of nobility. He drank the finest wines, ate the most delectable food and enjoyed the company of the loveliest, perfumed and bejeweled women of the noble class.

After years of this kind of life, the maharlika finally felt it was time to settle down and marry the woman of his choice. "But who is the woman to choose?" he asked himself as he sat in the rich splendor of his home, "All the women I know are beautiful and charming, but I am tired of the glitter of their jewels and the richness of their clothes!" He wanted a woman different from all the women he saw day and night, and found this in a simple village lass. She was charming in her own unaffected ways, and her name was Dama.

They married and lived contentedly. She loved him and took care of him. She pampered him with the most delicious dishes, and kept his home and his clothes in order. But soon, the newness wore off for the maharlika. He started to long for the company of his friends. He took a good look at his wife and thought, she is not beautiful and she does not have the air of nobility about her, she does not talk with wisdom. And so the maharlika returned to his own world of glitter and splendor. He spent his evenings sitting around with his friends in their noble homes, drank and talked till the first rays of the sun peeped from the iron grills of their ornate windows.

Poor Dama felt that she was losing her husband. She wept in the silence of their bedroom. "I cannot give my husband anything but the delights of my kitchen and the warmth of my bed. He is tired of me." She looked to the heavens. "Oh, friendly spirits!

Help me. Give me a magic charm. Just one little magic charm to make my husband come home again, that he will never want to leave my side, forever!"

It was midnight when the maharlika came home. He opened the door of their bedroom and called for Dama to tell her to prepare his nightclothes. "Dama! Dama, where are you?" he called. He shouted all around the bedroom. He searched the whole house. Still the nobleman could not find his simple wife. Finally the nobleman returned to their bedroom, tired and cross. But, as he opened the door, he stopped.

A rare scent, sweet and fragrant, drifted to him. It was a scent he had never smelled before. He entered the room and crossed to the window where the scent seemed to be floating from. A strange bush was growing outside the window. Some of its thin branches had already reached the iron grills and were twisting around. And all over the bush were thousands of tiny star like, white flowers, from which burst forth a heavenly, enchanting scent!

He stood there, completely enraptured by the glorious smell. "Dama..." he whispered softly, wonderingly, could this be Dama? The rich maharlika sat by the window, and waited for the return of his loving simple wife. But she did not come back. She never returned to him again. Only the fragrance of the flowers stayed with him, casting a spell over his whole being.

In the moonlight, Dama of the night, or Dama de Noche would be in full bloom, capturing the rich maharlika, making him never want to leave her side, forever.

The Prowess of Aliguyon

Retold by: F. Landa Jocano
(Ifugao, Visayas)

Long ago in Hannanga there lived a rich couple, Amtulao and Dumulao. They owned the longest and widest of the rice terraces that covered the mountainsides, and their harvests were the most plentiful. Their thatched house, large enough to contain three of their neighbors' huts, had piles of red and white camote. Buried in the earth were jars of rice wine. Amtulao's dogs were fat and well fed, not lean and starved looking as were the dogs of his neighbors. But with all their wealth, Amtulao and Dumulao were unhappy, for they were childless. They offered numerous sacrifices to the spirits; and they lived frugally and simply feeling somehow that austerity and lack of ostentation would please the anitos.

In the end their prayers were answered, and Dumulao gave birth to Aliguyon, a sturdy and handsome child.

Even as an infant, Aliguyon was precocious. He quickly learned the songs with which his mother lulled him to sleep, and in no time he could recite the long prayers chanted by the warriors on Hannanga. He even knew by heart the village lore, the stories that the old folks of the village told, reciting them word for word as he had heard them in the cool evenings. But what pleased Amtulao most was Aliguyon's skill with the spear and the shield. Amtulao made for him a little spear; and when at the age of three Aliguyon speared his first fish, Amtulao offered a pig as a sacrifice to the gods in

thanksgiving. At five Aliguyon had speared wild chickens, at seven he was an accepted companion of Amtulao on hunting trips.

Among his playmates Aliguyon was a favorite. He was accepted as the leader, and no one challenged his leadership, for could he not spin a top better than anyone else? And could he not “kill” the strongest tops by hitting them with the pointed stem of his own top? Amtulao loved his son and carefully taught him all the arts of hunting and fishing that he knew, and he told the boy all the stories of valor and prowess of which he knew so many. But always, he ended with the story about his bitter enemy in the village across the mountain. Pangaiwan of Daligdigian had to be conquered before Amtulao could die in peace.

So when Aliguyon reached manhood, he called his childhood friends, now skilled workers, and talked to them about the glories of war, the prize they could bring back, and the adventures and fame awaiting them if they joined him in an expedition to Daligdigian. Eagerly his friends ran for their spears and shields, and with provisions for three days, Aliguyon and ten warriors set forth. When they reached the enemy village, Aliguyon challenged Pangaiwan to fight, but Pangaiwan was old. Instead, up rose Pumbakhayon, his manly son, as skilled a warrior and as strong and keen eyed as Aliguyon.

For three years the two men fought, and when they rested, their friends fought man to man. But so well matched were the men, so equal in the arts of war, that no one was beaten. Each combat was a draw, each encounter ended with no one seriously wounded. At last Aliguyon and Pumbakhayon grew to admire each other. The people of Daligdigian, who had watched the strangers with suspicion, learned to like them for their courteous bearing and fair fighting. And the warriors of Hannanga found the girls in Daligdigian winningly shy and sweet.

One day, therefore, while Aliguyon and Pumbakhayon sat resting from a hotly contested fight, Pumbakhayon remarked: “What a waste of time! If were not enemies, we could be at home drinking rice wine and eating broiled river fish or roasted meat. But were enemies even though neither of us did the other any harm.” Aliguyon replied, “Ah, how truly you speak. Perhaps the anitos do not favor this fight, for neither has won. Perhaps the gods put your words into your mouth and this feeling in my heart, for I no longer wish to kill you, O Pumbakhayon.” His words fell on the ears of the listening warriors and on those of the villagers watching the combat. With a loud shout of approval, the warriors ran to their leaders and carried them to the house of Pumbakhayon where old Pangaiwan waited. Preparations began for a huge celebration. Squealing pigs were drag to be killed. The fattest dogs were killed and cooked. The fields were scoured for river fish and snails. Prized camotes, violet and orange, glutinous and sweet, were boiled or roasted. Bananas were laid out y the bunches; guavas and berries were heaped high, and in white scrubbed wooden bowls steamed small-grained upland rice, sweet smelling of fragrant herbs and banana leaves, and black-bottomed earthen pots. Everyone came to the feast, and as the jars of rice wine were emptied, the friendship between the strangers from Hannanga and the people of Daligdigian grew.

All throughout the feast, Aliguyon was fascinated by the light movements of Bagan, by her gaiety and her poise. At the end of the three-day feast, he approached Pangaiwan and said, “O Pangaiwan, once my father’s enemy but now his friend, grant, I beg of you, this one request. Let us bind our friendship with ties that even death cannot break. Give me your daughter Bagan for my wife. I love her; she is to me the brilliant sun

that warms the earth and drives away the chill of the night. She is to me the golden moon that brightens the dark and drives away the weariness of the day's work. Without her I cannot return to my village as I left it, for with her I have left y heart and my thoughts and my happiness."

Pangaiwan listened, and the men grew quite. Bugar blushed and bent her head. Fourteen times her father had harvested his yearly crops since she was born; she knew that after two or more harvests her father would begin looking critically at the young men who talked to her. But Aliguyon was such a hero, so strong and brave, so well spoken of and handsome! Would her father allow her to leave the house and follow Aliguyon?

Pangaiwan looked at his daughter fondly. He could read her thoughts as she looked at him mutely from under shyly lowered eyelashes. Clearing his throat, he answered slowly:

"Aliguyon, you are my son. The spirits are good. They have given me a worthy man for a son-in-law. Take Bugar. I pray the anitos that she will be a worthy wife for you and a dutiful daughter-in-law for Amtulao and Dumulao." His words were drowned by the joyous shouts of Aliguyon and his men. Aliguyon sprang into the air, yelling with happiness, and his friends chanted the first words of the courting song. The women took up the rhythm with their hands on bronze gongs and hollowed-out logs, and everyone crowded around to see Aliguyon mimic the strut of a rooster as he danced before Bugar.

In triumph he led her to his father in Hannanga, and kneeling before Amtulao and Dumulao, he cried: "O Father! O Mother! Your enemy in Daligdigian is no more. Pangaiwan, your enemy, no longer lived. In his place is Pangaiwan, the father-in-law of your only son Aliguyon. If you love me, love too the man whom your son promised to honor as the father of his wife. Behold, I have brought you my wife, Bugar of Daligdigian, the lovely daughter of Pangaiwan. I bring her to you, Father, so that someone can pound the dried meat for you when you are hungry. I brought her to you, O my mother, so that someone can carry water to you when you want to drink.

"I destroyed your enemy by making him a friend. Therefore, O Father, you can die in peace, for we have conquered him. But Bugar conquered my heart, and with her I can live in peace."

Thus did peace come to Amtulao and Dumulao. They lived to see Bugar enrich their lives with several grandchildren. Often Amtulao and Dumulao were honored guests at Daligdigian, in the house of Pangaiwan; and as often as they visited Pangaiwan, so often did he go to Hannanga to visit his grandchildren and to talk of old times with Amtulao and Dumulao.

The Story of Hinilawod

A concise version of the story of Hinilawod can be found in the book, Philippine Mythology, authored by the Filipino anthropologist, Dr. F. Landa Jocano. This version recounts the epic as follows:

Adventures of Datu Paubari and his Sons

When the goddess of the eastern sky Alunsina (also known as Laun Sina, "The Unmarried One") reached maidenhood, the king of the gods, Kaptan, decreed that she

should marry. All the unmarried gods of the different domains of the universe tried their luck to win her hand to no avail. She chose to marry a mortal, Datu Paubari, the mighty ruler of Halawod.

Her decision angered her other suitors. They plotted to bring harm to the newlyweds. A meeting of the council of gods was called by Maklium-sa-t'wan, god of the plains, where a decision by those present was made to destroy Halawod by flood.

Alunsina and Paubari escaped harm through the assistance of Suklang Malayon, the goddess and guardian of happy homes and sister of Alunsina, who learned of the evil plot and warned the two so they were able to seek refuge on higher ground.

After the flood waters subsided, Paubari and Alunsina returned to the plains secretly. They settled near the mouth of the Halawod River.

Several months later Alunsina became pregnant and told Paubari to prepare the siklot, things necessary for childbirth. She delivered a set of triplets and summoned the high priest Bungot-Banwa to perform the rites of the gods of Mount Madya-as (the mountain abode of the gods) to ensure the good health of the children. The high priest promptly made an altar and burned some alanghiran fronds and a pinch of kamangyan. When the ceremony was over he opened the windows of the north side of the room and a cold northerly wind came in and suddenly the three infants were transformed into strong, handsome young men.

Labaw Donggon, the eldest of the three, asked his mother to prepare his magic cape, hat, belt and kampilan (sword) for he heard of a place called Handug where a beautiful maiden named Angoy Ginbitinan lived.

The journey took several days. He walked across plains and valleys, climbed up mountains until he reached the mouth of the Halawod River. When he finally met the maiden's father and asked for her hand in marriage, the father asked him to fight the monster Manalintad as part of his dowry. He went off to confront the monster and with the help of his magic belt Labaw Donggon killed the monster and to prove his feat he brought to Angoy Ginbitinan's father the monster's tail.

After the wedding Labaw Donggon proceeded home with his new bride. Along the way they met a group of young men who told him that they were on their way to Tarambang Burok to win the hand of Abyang Durunuun, sister of Sumpoy the lord of the underworld and whose beauty was legendary.

Labaw Donggon and his bride continued on their journey home. The moment they arrived home Labaw Donggon told his mother to take care of his wife because he is taking another quest, this time he was going to Tarambang Burok.

Before he can get to the place he has to pass a ridge guarded by a giant named Sikay Padalogdog who has a hundred arms. The giant would not allow Labaw Donggon to go through without a fight. However, Sikay Padalogdog was no match to Labaw Donggon's prowess and skill in fighting so he gave up and allowed him to continue.

Labaw Donggon won the hand of Abyang Durunuun and also took her home. Before long he went on another journey, this time it is to Gadlum to ask for the hand of Malitong Yawa Sinagmaling Diwata who is the young bride of Saragnayan the lord of darkness.

This trip required him to use his biday nga inagta (black boat) on which he sailed across the seas for many months, went across the region of the clouds, passing the land of stones until finally he reached the shores of Tulogmatian which was the seaside fortress

of Saragnayan. The moment he set foot on the ground Saragnayan asked him, "Who are you and why are you here?" To which he answered, "I am Labaw Donggon, son of Datu Paubari and goddess Alunsina of Halawod. I came for the beautiful Malitong Yawa Sinagmaling Diwata."

Saragnayan laughed. He told Labaw Donggon that what he wished for was impossible to grant because she was his wife. Labaw Donggon then challenged Saragnayan to a duel saying that whoever wins will have her.

The challenge was accepted and they started fighting. Labaw Donggon submerged Saragnayan under water for seven years, but when he let go of him, Saragnayan was still alive. The latter uprooted a coconut tree and started beating Labaw Donggon with it. He survived the beating but was not able to surpass the powers of Saragnayan's pamlang (amulet) and eventually he gave up and was imprisoned by Saragnayan beneath his house.

Back home Angoy Ginbitinan and Abyang Durunuun both delivered sons. Angoy Ginbitinan's child was named Aso Mangga and Abyang Durunuun's son was called Abyang Baranugon.

Only a few days after they were born Aso Mangga and Abyang Baranugon embarked to look for their father. They rode their sailboats through the region of eternal darkness, passed the region of the clouds and the land of stones, finally reaching Saragnayan's home. Saragnayan noticed that Abyang Baranugon's umbilical cord have not yet been removed, he laughed and told the child to go home to his mother.

Abyang Baranugon was slighted by the remarks and immediately challenged Saragnayan to a duel. They fought and Abyang Baranugon defeated Saragnayan and won his father's freedom.

Labaw Donggon's defeat and subsequent imprisonment by the Lord of Darkness also angered his brothers. Humadapnon was so enraged that he swore to the gods of Madya-as that he would wreak revenge on all of Saragnayan's kinsmen and followers.

Humadapnon prepared to go to Saragnayan's domain. He employed the aid of Buyong Matanayon of Mount Matiula who was well-known for his skill in swordsmanship. For their journey they rode on a sailboat called biday nga rumba-rumba. They travelled through the region of the clouds, passed by the region of eternal darkness and ended up at a place called Tarambang Buriraw. In this place was a ridge called Talagas Kuting-tang where a seductive sorceress named Piganun lived.

Piganun changed herself to a beautiful maiden and captured the heart of Humadapnon. Buyong Matanayon begged with Humadapnon to leave the place with him but the latter refused. After seven months passed, Buyong Matanayon remembered that they have brought with them some ginger. One evening at dinner time Buyong Matanayon threw seven slices of ginger into the fire. When Piganun smelled the odor of burning ginger she left the dinner table because sorcerers hated the odor of ginger. Immediately Buyong Matanayon struck Humadapnon, who became unconscious. He dragged his friend with him and they were able to escape.

They continued with their trek and everywhere they went they exacted revenge on all of Saragnayan's people and relatives. One day they reached a place called Piniling Tubig who was ruled by Datu Umbaw Pinaumbaw. There was a big gathering in the village and when they asked what was going on they were told that the datu was giving his daughter for marriage to whoever could remove the huge boulder that rolled from a

mountain into the center of the village. Many men tried their luck but no one so far was able to even move the stone.

Humadapnon took off his magic cape and used it to lift the stone and threw it back into the mountain. The datu kept his word and Humadapnon married his daughter. During the wedding feast Humadapnon heard about the beauty of the goddess of greed Burigadang Pada Sinaklang Bulawan from a guest minstrel who sang at the celebration.

After the wedding Humadapnon went to seek the hand of the goddess in marriage. Along the way he encountered Buyong Makabagting, son of the mighty Datu Balahidyong of Paling Bukid who was also travelling with the same purpose in mind. Upon learning of Humadapnon's intent, Buyong Makabagting challenged him to a duel. They fought and Buyong Makabagting was no match to Humadapnon's strength and skill. The fight ended when Buyong Makabagting surrendered and even promised to aid Humadapnon in his quest. Humadapnon married the goddess and brought her home. Meanwhile, right after Humadapnon left to seek Saragnayan's followers and relatives his brother Dumaladap left for Burutlakan-ka-adlaw where the maiden Lubay-Lubyok Hanginun si Mahuyokhuyokon lived. For the trip he brought along Dumasig, the most powerful wrestler in Madya-as.

Several months later they came to a place called Tarambuan-ka-banwa where they encountered the two-headed monster Balanakon who guarded a narrow ridge leading to the place where the maiden lived.

With the aid of Dumasig, Dumaladap killed Balanakon. However, upon approaching the gate of the palace where the maiden lived he was confronted by Uyutang, a bat like monster with sharp poisonous claws. There ensued a bloody battle between the Humadapnon and the monster. They fought for seven months and their skill and prowess seemed to be equal. But on the seventh month, Humadapnon was able to grab on to Uyutang's ankle and broke it. Then he took his iwang daniwan (magic dagger) and stabbed Uyutang under the armpit. Uyutang cried out so loud that the ridge where they were fighting broke into two and there was an earthquake. Half of the ridge became the island of Buglas (Negros) and the other became the island of Panay.

Dumaladap married Lubay-Lubyok Hanginun si Mahuyokhuyokan and then took her home. Datu Paubari was very happy when he was reunited with his three sons and he prepared a feast in their honor. After the celebration, the three brothers left for different parts of the world. Labaw Donggon went to the north, Humadapnon went south, Dumaladap to the west and Datu Paubari remained in the east.

The Adventures of Humadapnon

A message from his spirit friends, Taghoy and Duwindi, came to Humadapnon in his sleep. In his dream he was told that a lovely maiden named Nagmalitong Yawa lived in a village by the mouth of the Halawod River. Humadapnon was the chief of the Sulod Nation whose people occupied an area close to the source of the Pan-ay River.

Humadapnon went to look for the maiden. He rode his golden boat for the journey. One day his boat was taken by a mysterious force that led it to a stagnant sea where the water was the color of human blood. It took Humadapnon and his crew seven months to cross this body of water.

They all thought they were safe until a strong wind came upon them and the boat was blown into a passage near the mouth of the Saruma River where two islands

continuously hit each other at intervals. With the help of his spirit friends Humadapnon was able to navigate his boat through the channel safely.

One day they came upon an island called Tarangban which was inhabited by beautiful women headed by a sorceress named Ginmayunan. Through the use of her charms and magic she persuaded Humadapnon to stay. Later Humadapnon and his crew were imprisoned by the women in the island for seven years.

Taghoy and Duwindi went to seek the help of Nagmalitong Yawa to free their friend. Nagmalitong Yawa, disguised as a man named Buyung Sunmasakay, won the freedom of Humadapnon and his crew. Afterwards Buyung Sunmasakay performed a ritual which removed the charms of Ginmayunan on Humadapnon. When Buyung Sunmasakay transformed back into Nagmalitong Yawa, Humadapnon was struck by her beauty and immediately asked for her hand in marriage.

The maiden, who also was in love with him, told Humadapnon that she has to go back home to ask the blessings of her parents before she gets married. So they proceeded to Halawod. Along the way Humadapnon encountered Buyung Paglambuhan who ruled an island fortress in the middle of the sea. He vanquished the latter. Humadapnon and Nagmalitong Yawa were married in Halawod.

During the wedding feast, Dupalapdap met Huyung Adlaw, the daughter of one of the guests, Nabalansang Sukla who was the god of the Upper world. Dupalapdap requested his brother Humadapnon to help him talk to the maiden's parents. They planned to go to the Upper world after the wedding feast.

The journey took seven years. Matan-ayon, Humadapnon's mother suggested to Malitong Yawa that she should marry again for it seems that her husband is not coming back. Nagmalitong Yawa decided to re-marry this time to a man named Buyung Sumagulung, son of Mamang Paglambuhan who ruled an island fortress. The wedding ceremony was about to start when Humadapnon and Dupalapdap returned. At a distance Humadapnon blew his horn to signal his arrival. Those who were gathered for the ceremony grew fearful and some of the men went to the shoreline to meet the brothers and inform them of what was happening. The two were so angered that they killed all guests and the groom.

Humadapnon confronted his wife about her treachery. She explained that it was his mother who made the suggestion for her to re-marry. Humadapnon stabbed his wife to death. Later his conscience bothered him for what he did to his wife. His spirit friends also told him that his wife was not at fault and that what he did was unjust.

With remorse in his heart he approached his sister Labing Anyag and asked for her help for she had the power to bring back life to the dead. Seeing that her brother was genuinely sorry for what he did, she complied and brought back Nagmalitong Yawa from the dead.

Nagmalitong Yawa also felt shame for what she did to her husband so she ran away from him and went to the Underworld which was ruled by her uncle, Panlinugun, who is lord of the earthquake. Humadapnon followed her to the Underworld killing the eight-headed snake that guarded the channel leading to the place. She ran towards the Upper world but half-way between the Middle world and the Upper world she was spirited away by a young man riding on the shoulders of the wind.

Humadapnon caught up with them and challenged the stranger to a duel. They fought for seven years with no one gaining the upper hand. The long fight was being

witnessed by Alunsina from above. She got tired watching the contest so she came down to settle the case.

During the deliberations it was revealed to everyone's surprise that the stranger was Amarotha, also a son of Alunsina who died at childbirth but was brought back to life by her to keep her company. Alunsina decided that each man was entitled to a part of Nagmalitong Yawa so she ordered that the latter's body be cut in half. One half went to Humadapnon and the other to Amarotha. Alunsina then turned each half into a whole live person.

Humadapnon brought his wife back to Panay and ruled the island for centuries.

Bernardo Carpio

Bernardo Carpio is a legendary figure in Philippine Mythology who is said to be the cause of earthquakes. However, since Filipino folk literature is mostly oral in origin, there are numerous versions of this tale. Some versions say Bernardo Carpio is a giant, as supported by the enormous footsteps he has reputedly left behind in the mountains of Montalban. Others say he was the size of an ordinary man. However, all versions agree he had a strength that was similar to that of Hercules.

The basic form of the legend is that Bernardo Carpio, a being of great strength, is trapped in between two great rocks in the Mountains of Rodriguez, Rizal (formerly Montalban, Rizal).

Some versions say he is keeping the mountains from crashing into each other (similar to the Greek titan Atlas holding up the sky), and some versions say he is trapped and trying to break free. When Bernardo Carpio shrugs his shoulder, an earthquake occurs.

According to one version of the tale, Bernardo Carpio was a lad who grew up in San Mateo, Rizal, and was part of a rebellion against the Spanish, who feared his incredible strength.

The Spanish hired a local engkantado (shaman) and conspired to trap him through supernatural means. Calling for a parley, they lured him towards a cave in the mountains of Montalban. The lad fell for the trap. The engkantado used his agimat (talisman) and Bernardo Carpio was caught between two boulders which the shaman had caused to grind each other. The legend says he was not killed, but was trapped between these two boulders, unable to escape because the talisman's power was as great as his own strength.

When Carpio's co-conspirators arrived at the cave to rescue him, they were blocked from the cave by a series of cave-ins that killed several of the men. People soon surmised that whenever an earthquake happens, it is caused by Bernardo Carpio trying to free himself from the mountain.

The same version says that Bernardo Carpio demonstrated unusual strength, even as a child. As a result, the parish priest who baptized him suggested that his parents name him after the Spanish legendary hero Bernardo del Carpio. This became a foreshadowing of the legendary life Carpio himself would lead.

As symbolism of freedom Damiana Eugenio was able to find and document a 1940 compilation of tales detailing the legend of Bernardo Carpio. It specifically says that: "Bernardo Carpio is considered the savior of the Filipinos against national oppression and enslavement".

According to that particular telling of the tale, when the last link on the chains binding Carpio is broken, "the enslavement and oppression of the Filipino race will be replaced with freedom and happiness." While this belief apparently referred to the Spanish Occupation of the Philippines and the later occupation by the Philippines by the U.S. and by Japan in WWII, the legend has continued to be told this way, an apparent reference to freedom from poverty rather than foreign domination.

Filipino revolutionary heroes Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio are said to have paid homage to the Bernardo Carpio legend - the former by making a pilgrimage to Montalban, and the latter making the caves of Montalban the secret meeting place for the Katipunan movement.

The tale of Bernardo Carpio can be considered an etiological myth which explains the occurrence of Earthquakes. Interestingly, the area which hosts the legend of Bernardo Carpio is also home to the Valley Fault System (formerly called the Marikina Valley Fault System).

Gods and Goddesses in Philippine Myth

The stories of ancient Philippine mythology include deities, creation stories, mythical creatures, and beliefs. Ancient Philippine mythology varies among the many indigenous tribes of the Philippines. Some tribes during the pre-Spanish conquest era believed in a single Supreme Being who created the world and everything in it, while others chose to worship a multitude of tree and forest deities (diwatas). Below are some of the gods and goddesses of the various ancient Philippine tribes:

Luzon Gods

Bathala - also known formally as *Bathalang Maykapal* or *Maykapal* for short and by the Cebuano people as *Abba* — is the Tagalogs chief god that is the creator of the universe and humanity. He is possibly worshiped by the Visayans.

Apo Laki is the Central Luzon god of the sun and lord of war. He is the son of Bathala and brother of Mayari, but in the other myth his sister is Dian Masalanta and his parents were Anagolay and Dumakulem. He is identified to the Pangasinense god Ama/Apo-Kaoley, he is called by some people as Adlaw but actually it is a Visayan word for "Sun" just like his sister Mayari (who is called Bulan).

Mayari is the ancient Tagalog goddess and protector of the moon, one-eyed but extremely beautiful. She is the daughter of Bathala and sister of Tala and Apolake. Apolake and Mayari once got into argument about who would be the better ruler of the world. Apolake referred to his male strengths and Mayari insisted on equal rights. The dispute intensified and the two started to hit each other with wooden bars. Mayari received a blow on her face and was blinded on one eye. Apolake was very sorry for his deed and he offered her friendship and mutual change in the power over the world and Mayari agreed.

Dian Masalanta is the ancient Tagalogs goddess of love, pregnancy, childbirth. But in the other myth, she is the daughter of Anagolay and Dumakulem with Apolake, the god of war, her brother.

Lakapati (*Ikapati, Lakanpati*) is the ancient Tagalogs deity of fertility and cultivated fields, a hermaphrodite. (S)He is also the protector of crops and farm animals. As Ikapati she is a great mother goddess for the Tagalogs, her name means "giver of food" and her worshippers pray for her to protect them from starvation. She protects the growing food and animals for her people who acknowledge her and provides abundance during the harvest. In other myths, she is a consort of Bathala/Abba (both of them were sometimes viewed as hermaphrodite), and was first responsible for the creation of the universe. It was thought that she started creating the universe, but it was Bathala who finished it. During the early period of Spanish Colonialization, Lakapati was used by evangelists as a native equivalent for the Holy Spirit.

Lakan Bakod is the ancient Tagalog god of fences, Loarca explains, and was approached by the tagalogs to keep their fences strong.

Anitun Tabu is the Central-Luzon goddess of the wind and rain.

Idianalé (*Idianalo, Ideale*) is the ancient Tagalogs goddess of works and good actions. She is invoke by the ancient Tagalog people for guidance and success in their workings, even the farmers call upon her for help and protection that is why she is also worshipped as a goddess of agriculture specially animal husbandry. She is said to be a favorite deity of the Katalonans (ancient Tagalog priestess or priest).

Tadaklan is the Tinguian god of thunder, as worshiped by those people of central Luzon.

Kimat is the lightning dog, owned by *Tadaklan*. When Kimat attacks, he comes down from heaven and bites whatever it is aimed at.

Other Gods

Kaptan is the ancient Visayan sky god, for those people who still believe in him. In mythology, he is often shown as the sibling of Maguayen, who is the god of the sea.

Kan-Laon (Lalahon) is the southern Visayan supreme deity, especially in the island of Negros where her abode is Mt. Kanlaon. In ancient times, natives blamed her for sending armies of locusts to destroy their harvest, as they offered gifts in order to please her and prevent her from doing this.

Gugurang is the Bicolano chief god and keeper of a sacred fire atop Mt. Mayon.

Aswang is the Bicolano god of evil, where he is both the brother and enemy to *Gugurang*.

Haliya is the Bicolano goddess of the moon and protector of women. To the Bicolanas, Haliya is their protector from Bakonawa, the evil serpent that takes on a woman's form when Haliya does not rise.

There are many different creation stories in Philippine mythology, originating from various ethnic groups.

Tagalog Version

A popular legend tells the story of how Bathala created the people of the islands.

In the beginning when the Earth was still young, the gods, Bathala; Aman Sinaya; and Amihan, were the only beings that existed. Bathala was god of the Sky (Langit) and Aman Sinaya was goddess of the Sea (Dagat). The two have been fierce rivals for a long time, and everyday, they would try to outdo each other. Bathala used his lighting bolts and thunder, and Aman Sinaya used her waves and typhoons.

One day, Aman Sinaya decided to send her tempests into the Sky to cause a wild commotion. In order to stop her, Bathala threw giant boulders that came from atop of the mountains. It created thousands of islands onto the surface of the Sea, which became the Philippine archipelago. Amihan, the Northeast Wind in the middle of the two realms, decided to stop the battle once and for all by taking the form of a bird. She then flew back and forth between them. This made the Sky and the Sea closer than it was before. At the point where the two realms met, both deities agreed to end the fight and become friends.

As a sign of friendship, Bathala planted a seed underneath the ocean floor. It soon grew into a bamboo reed, sticking out of the edge of the Sea. Amihan had gazed upon it one day and heard voices, coming from inside the bamboo. "Oh, North Wind! North Wind! Please let us out!" the voices said. She pecked the reed once, then twice. All of a sudden, the bamboo cracked and slit open. Inside were two human beings; one was a male and the other was a female. Amihan named the man "Malakas" (Strong) and the woman "Maganda" (Beautiful). She then flew them onto one of the islands where they settled, built a house, and had millions of offspring that populated the Earth.



Then, it finally came when the children were too numerous for Malakas and Maganda to control. One day, they were ordered to work in the fields, but instead, they did nothing. When the parents arrived home, they noticed that their instructions weren't followed. Asking for some guidance, they prayed to the great god, Bathala, and he came to them and said, "Let your anger be shown to everyone and it shall make them into what they are meant to be." So out of their anger, they grabbed spoon ladles and began to give blows to everyone.

All the children started running away. Some hid under the bamboo tables and became slaves. A few of them went inside the burning cauldron and turned into the Aetas of the islands. Others climbed up the rooftop and became the datos of the villages. While some climbed on top of the trees and were believed to have become the commoners.

Those who fled to the mountains turned into hunters and the ones who ran to the seashore turned into fishermen.

Visayan Version

This is an ancient Visayan account of creation:

Thousands of years ago, there was no land, sun, moon, or stars, and the world was only a great sea of water, above which stretched the sky. The water was the kingdom of the god Maguayan, and the sky was ruled by the great god, Kaptan.

Maguayan had a daughter called Lidagat, the sea, and Kaptan had a son known as Lihangin, the wind. The gods agreed to the marriage of their children, so the sea became the bride of the wind.

A daughter and three sons were born to them. The sons were called Likalibutan, Liadlao, and Libulan, and the daughter received the name of Lisuga. Likalibutan had a body of rock and was strong and brave; Liadlao was formed of gold and was always happy; Libulan was made of copper and was weak and timid; and the beautiful Lisuga had a body of pure silver and was sweet and gentle. Their parents were very fond of them, and nothing was wanting to make them happy.

After a time Lihangin died and left the control of the winds to his eldest son Likalibutan. The faithful wife Lidagat soon followed her husband, and the children, now grown up, were left without father or mother. However, their grandfathers, Kaptan and Maguayan, took care of them and guarded them from all evil.

After some time, Likalibutan, proud of his power over the winds, resolved to gain more power, and asked his brothers to join him in an attack on Kaptan in the sky above. They refused at first, but when Likalibutan became angry with them, the amiable Liadlao, not wishing to offend his brother, agreed to help. Then together they induced the timid Libulan to join in the plan.

When all was ready, the three brothers rushed at the sky, but they could not beat down the gates of steel that guarded the entrance. Likalibutan let loose the strongest winds and blew the bars in every direction. The brothers rushed into the opening, but were met by the angry god Kaptan. So terrible did he look that they turned and ran in terror, but Kaptan, furious at the destruction of his gates, sent three bolts of lightning after them.

The first struck the copper Libulan and melted him into a ball. The second struck the golden Liadlao and he too was melted. The third bolt struck Likalibutan and his rocky body broke into many pieces and fell into the sea. So huge was he that parts of his body stuck out above the water and became what is known as land.

In the meantime the gentle Lisuga had missed her brothers and started to look for them. She went toward the sky, but as she approached the broken gates, Kaptan, blind with anger, struck her too with lightning, and her silver body broke into thousands of pieces.

Kaptan then came down from the sky and tore the sea apart, calling on Maguayan to come to him and accusing him of ordering the attack on the sky. Soon Maguayan appeared and answered that he knew nothing of the plot as he had been asleep deep in the sea. After some time, he succeeded in calming the angry Kaptan. Together they wept at the loss of their grandchildren, especially the gentle and beautiful Lisuga, but even with

their powers, they could not restore the dead back to life. However, they gave to each body a beautiful light that will shine forever.

And so it was the golden Liadlao who became the sun and the copper Libulan, the moon, while Lisuga's pieces of silver were turned into the stars of heaven. To wicked Likalibutan, the gods gave no light, but resolved to make his body support a new race of people. So Kaptan gave Maguayan a seed and he planted it on one of the islands.

Soon a bamboo tree grew up, and from the hollow of one of its branches, a man and a woman came out. The man's name was Sikalak and the woman was called Sikabay. They were the parents of the human race. Their first child was a son whom they called Libo; afterwards they had a daughter who was known as Saman.

Pandaguan, the youngest son, was very clever and invented a trap to catch fish. The very first thing he caught was a huge shark. When he brought it to land, it looked so great and fierce that he thought it was surely a god, and he at once ordered his people to worship it. Soon all gathered around and began to sing and pray to the shark. Suddenly the sky and sea opened, and the gods came out and ordered Pandaguan to throw the shark back into the sea and to worship none, but them.

All were afraid except Pandaguan. He grew very bold and answered that the shark was as big as the gods, and that since he had been able to overpower it he would also be able to conquer the gods. Then Kaptan, hearing this, struck Pandaguan with a small lightning bolt, for he did not wish to kill him but merely to teach him a lesson. Then he and Maguayan decided to punish these people by scattering them over the earth, so they carried some to one land and some to another. Many children were afterwards born, and thus the earth became inhabited in all parts.

Pandaguan did not die. After lying on the ground for thirty days he regained his strength, but his body was blackened from the lightning, and his descendants became the dark-skinned tribe, the Negritos.

As punishment, his eldest son, Aryon, was taken north where the cold took away his senses. While Libo and Saman were carried south, where the hot sun scorched their bodies. A son of Saman and a daughter of Sikalak were carried east, where the land at first was so lacking in food that they were compelled to eat clay.

Bathala

According to Philippine mythology, Bathalang Maykapal, or Bathala for short, was the Supreme God of the ancient Tagalogs and King of the Diwata. All of these beliefs were soon changed after the Spaniards set foot on the islands. Spanish missionaries used Bathala as a way for them to convert the Tagalogs into Christianity by associating him with the Christian God. They also did this to the other deities by replacing them with saints. Since then, the name "Bathala" was used to refer to the Christian God and is still used by Filipinos today, and God is even addressed as "Poong (Panginoon, meaning "Lord") Maykapal".

Bathala's Northern Luzon counterparts are Kabunian and Lumawig; his Southern Luzon counterpart is Gugurang; and his Visayan counterparts are Abba, Kan-Laon, and Kaptan.

Bathala and the other gods and goddesses were said to have lived in a kingdom above the skies, called Kalualhatian (Sky World). The Tagalogs used to think that anitos, which are small ancient wooden idols from the Philippines, were his ministers on Earth.

His main enemies are the lizard god, Bakonawa, who is ruler of Kasanaan (the Underworld) and his evil spawns of darkness, such as the aswang and the manananggal Apolaki, Mayari, and Tala.

Legend has it that Bathala fell in love with a mortal woman when he was visiting the Earth. They got married and had three children: Apolaki, Mayari, and Tala.

Many years had passed and the three younglings grew up to become mighty demigods. The time has finally come for them to take their rightful place in Kalualhatian. There was a big feast in the sky world and both gods and humans were celebrating. After the feast was done, the ceremony of initiation began. Bathala came out of the crowd and summoned his children to stand in front of him. He then appointed them with a task.

Apolaki was appointed "God of War" and "Guardian of the Sun". Mayari was appointed to be "Goddess of the Moon". Tala was appointed "Goddess of the Stars".

The three offspring of Bathala soon became known to be among the greatest of gods and goddesses.

Mayari

Should not be confused with Mayari.

In Tagalog mythology, Mayari (also known as Bulan) is the beautiful lunar deity who was the daughter of Bathala, the king of the gods, to a mortal woman. She is the sister of Tala, the goddess of stars and Adlaw (also known as Apolaki), god of the sun.

In a Pampangan myth, Bathala died without leaving a will and Apolaki and Mayari fought over who would rule the earth. Apolaki wanted to rule the earth alone while Mayari insisted on equal rights. The two fought out the conflict with bamboo clubs until Mayari lost an eye. After Apolaki saw what he had done, he agreed to ruling the earth together but at different times. However, her light is dimmer than her brother's due to the loss of her eye.

Kan-Laon

Kan-Laon is the name of an ancient Visayan deity. During pre-Hispanic times, the deity was worshiped by the natives as their Supreme Ruler. Kan-Laon means "He Who Is Ruler Of Time".

Mt. Canlaon, situated on the island of Negros, is the highest mountain in the Visayas region. The mountain is said to be where Laon made his presence to the people. In ancient times, native priests (babaylan) would climb up the mountain and do rituals every good harvest season or when there was a special ceremony. They would also offer gifts as a sign of respect. Canlaon City now stands beside the mountain.

Kan-Laon has many counterparts all over the Philippine archipelago. Some of the more popular are Bathala of the Tagalogs, Gugurang of the Bicolanos, and Kabunian of the Ifugaos.

Mythical Beings

Aswang

An Aswang (or Asuwang) is a ghoulish creature in Filipino folklore. The myth of the aswang is popular in the Western Visayan regions such as Capiz, Iloilo and Antique. The trademark or major feature of Aswangs which distinguish them from other Filipino mythological creatures is their propensity to replace stolen cadavers with the trunk of a banana tree carved in the cadaver's likeness. They are also said to like to eat small children. Their favorite body parts are the liver and heart. Other local names, especially in Capiz are tik-tik and wak-wak.

Aswang, at times, is also a generic term applied to all types of mythological creatures, ghosts, manananggals, witches, shapeshifters, lycanths and monsters. Aswang is often interchanged with manananggal, but they are different. There are also characteristics and features that the Aswang also varies from Filipino to Filipino. They usually live near the mountains and they never go in to cities.

With respect to Aswang, Capiz (a province on Panay island) is the subject or focus of many Aswang, and other types of mythological and folkloric ghosts (multo), goblins, ghouls, manananggal, witches (mangkukulam), giant half-horse men (tikbalang) and other monster stories, especially for tabloids. Capiz is (unfairly) rumored to have a number of aswang and covens of witches. Superstitious folk who believe in their existence can still be found in these parts. They typically adorn windows, rooms, etc. with garlic bulbs, holy water, and other anti- aswang paraphernalia which supposedly repels these creatures. Aswangs have the ability to transform into other animals like dogs, bats and snakes.

The myth of the Aswang is popular in the Visayan region of the Philippines, specially in the western provinces of Capiz, Iloilo, Antique. Aside from entertainment value, mothers are said to tell their children Aswang stories to keep them off the streets and keep them home at night. Similar to Count Vlad III Dracula of Transylvania in Vampire stories, the most popular characters are the clan of Teñente/ Tenyente/ Tiniente Gimo of the town of Dueñas, Iloilo.

An aswang is a regular townsperson by day and prefer an occupation related to meat, such as butchery or making sausages. Aswangs have an ageless appearance and a quiet, shy and elusive manner. They can be distinguished from humans by two signs. One is the bloodshot eyes from staying up all night looking for opportunities to sneak into houses where funeral wakes are being held, and stealing the dead bodies.

According to the elderly, the Aswang can also transform from human to animal and animal to human. The Aswang can disguise him/herself as a pig, dog or a black bird. Supposedly if a person looks at them in the eyes, the reflection would appear inverted. During their nocturnal activities, they walk with their feet facing backwards and toenails reversed.

One type is the tik-tik which transforms into a huge bird/bat at night and prowls. The tik-tik looks for a pregnant woman. Then extends a very long proboscis into the womb and licks the baby to kill it. While performing, a 'tik-tik' sound is heard.

In some stories, the tik-tik is an aswang's familiar, said to confuse people by its 'tik-tik' sound. If the aswang is near, the sound would be faint so that people hearing it would think that the aswang is still far away.

Manananggal



A manananggal in Filipino folklore or penanggalan in Malay folklore is a mythical creature. It resembles a Western vampire, in being an evil, human-devouring monster or witch. The myth of the Manananggal is popular in the Visayan region of the Philippines, especially in the western provinces of Capiz, Iloilo, Antique. There are varying accounts of the features of a manananggal. Like vampires, Visayan folklore creatures, and aswangs, manananggals are also said to abhor garlic and salt. They were also known to avoid daggers, light, vinegar, spices and the tail of a sting ray which can be fashioned as a whip. Folklore of similar creatures can be found in the neighbouring nations of Indonesia and Malaysia.

A manananggal is described as being an older, beautiful woman (as opposed to an aswang), capable of severing its upper torso in order to fly into the night with huge bat-like wings to prey on unsuspecting, pregnant women in their homes; using an elongated proboscis-like tongue, it sucks the hearts of fetuses or blood of an unsuspecting, sleeping victim. The severed lower torso is left standing and it is said to be the more vulnerable of the two halves. Sprinkling salt or smearing crushed garlic or ash on top of the standing torso is fatal to the creature. The upper torso then would not be able to rejoin and will die at daybreak. The name of the creature originates from an expression used for a severed torso: Manananggal comes from the Tagalog, tanggal (cognate of Malay and Indonesian tanggal) which means to remove or to separate. Manananggal then means the one who separates itself from its lower body.

Superstitious folk in the Visayan provinces still hang cloves of garlic or onion around windows, doors, etc. with the purpose of repelling this creature as well as the aswang. They are a favorite theme for sensationalist tabloids. They may be a product of mass hysteria or intentionally propagated to keep children off the street, home at night and wary or careful of strangers, or simply to entertain them.

There are various ways into which a person can become a manananggal. In one story, a girl that became a viscera sucker admitted to her human suitor that she felt like eating the sputum of sick people. She said that she had this feeling after she rejected the advances of a former suitor which turned out to be an aswang. Another way of producing a manananggal would be by swallowing a black chick, a creature that came from the throat of an old manananggal. The old manananggal cannot die unless they pass this chick to a replacement. The monster chick can be removed by fumigating the victim while attached upside down in a tree. The victim can also be spun round and round until she throws up the chick due to dizziness.

There are four other ways to transform a person into an aswang or as a viscera sucker: by "personal effort", through contamination (addition of an old manananggal's

saliva or bits of human flesh to the victim's food), transmission via supernatural means, and heredity. For personal effort, one can force the transmission by holding a fertilized egg to one's body and securing it via a cloth. The egg would then mysteriously osmose to one's body after an unknown amount of time, creating the chick that would make the person a fully-fledged viscera sucker.

The province of Capiz is the subject or focus of many manananggal stories, similarly with the stories of other types of mythical creatures, such as ghosts, goblins, ghouls and aswangs. Among the indigenous people, Capiz has a reputation for harboring many of these creatures.

Mangkukulam

Mangkukulam (noun) is a person employing or using Kulam. Kinukulam is the target of the Kulam. Nakulam means someone or something experiencing the effects of the Kulam.

Kulam in the Philippines is said to be centered on the islands of Siquijor and Samar and the province of Sorsogon, where many of the country's faith healers reside.

Kulam also exists in many of the hinterlands, especially in Samar and Leyte.

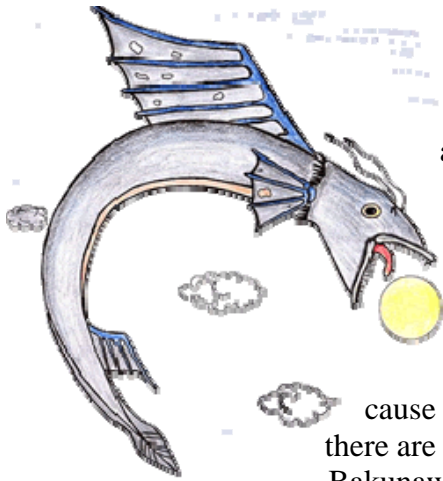
The mangkukulam is the Filipino version of witch or sorcerer, the name deriving from the word kulam. Another term is brujo ('bruho' for warlocks), bruja ('bruha' for witches). The verb kulamin means "to place a hex". And a curse in Filipino is a sumpa.

The mangkukulam recites spells and mixes potions. Modern influences have transformed popular perception so that the mangkukulam now also uses the equivalent of dolls. The mangkukulam's curses are mitigated by finding him/her and giving bribes.

Superstitious folks still attribute certain illnesses or diseases to kulam. This most often happens in the provinces, where an herbal doctor, albularyo, treats them. In some rural provincial areas, people completely rely on the albularyo for treatment.

Mythical Animals

Bakunawa



The Bakunawa, also known as Bakonawa, Baconaua, or Bakonaua, is a deity in Philippine mythology that is often represented as a gigantic sea serpent. He is believed to be the god of the underworld and is often considered to be the cause of eclipses.

It appears as a giant sea serpent with a mouth the size of a lake, a red tongue, whiskers, gills, small wires at its sides, and two sets of wings, one is large and ash-gray while the other is small and is found further down its body.

Tales about the Bakunawa say that it is the cause of eclipses. During ancient times, Filipinos believe that there are seven moons created by Bathala to light up the sky. The Bakunawa, amazed by their beauty, would rise from the ocean and swallow the moons whole, angering Bathala and causing them to be mortal enemies.

To keep the Bakonawa moons from completely being swallowed, ancient Filipinos would go out of their homes with pans and pots, and would make noise in order to scare the Bakonawa into spitting out the moon back into the sky.

In Filipino folk literature, the Bakonawa is said to have a sister in the form of a sea turtle. The sea turtle would visit a certain island in the Philippines in order to lay its eggs. However, locals soon discovered that every time the sea turtle went to shore, the water seemed to follow her, thus reducing the island's size. Worried that their island would eventually disappear, the locals killed the sea turtle.

When the Bakunawa found out about this, it arose from the sea and ate the moon. The people were afraid so they prayed to Bathala to punish the creature. Bathala refused but instead told them to bang some pots and pans in order to disturb the serpent. The moon is then regurgitated while the Bakunawa disappeared, never to be seen again. The island where the sea turtle lays its eggs is said to exist today. Some sources say that the island might just be one of the Turtle Islands.

Figures of the Bakunawa's head decorate the hilts of many ancient Filipino swords. These swords that originate in Panay are said to bestow upon the hangaway or mandirigma (sacred warriors) the fearful presence and power of the Bakunawa (or whatever deity/animal they have on their deity hilt) when they wield their swords in combat.

A children's game called Bulan Bulan, Buwan Buwan, or Bakunawa is played in the Philippines. It has 8-6 players arranged in a circle. A player acts as the buwan/bulan (moon) while another player act as the bakunawa (eclipse), chosen either through Jack-en-poy, "maalis taya", or "maiba taya." The other participants stand in a circle facing the center and holding each other's hands. The buwan/bulan stands inside the circle while the bakunawa stands outside.

The object of the game is for the bakunawa to tag or touch the buwan/bulan. The rest of the players try to prevent the bakunawa from doing so by holding on to each other

and running around the circle as fast as they can while not letting go of the ones next to them.

For the bakunawa to get into the circle, he or she asks one of the players, "What chain is this?" and when the player replies, "This is an iron chain," the bakunawa should ask another player because an iron chain is supposed to be unbreakable. A player who wants to let the bakunawa in can say, "This is an abaca chain," and should let go of his or her hold. This is usually done when the player playing as the bakunawa is tired from running around.

The bakunawa can also try to get in by going under the linked hands. If the player chosen as the bakunawa is fast and small enough, this can be done easily. As soon as the bakunawa succeeds in getting in, the players forming the circle should let the buwan out of the circle.

The bakunawa then tries to break out of the linked hands to try and get out to catch the buwan/bulan. When the bakunawa succeeds in catching the buwan/bulan, they exchange places, or if both of them are too tired, another pair from the circle of players is chosen as the new bakunawa and buwan/bulan.

Sigbin

The Sigbin is a creature of Philippine mythology said to come out at night to suck the blood of victims from their shadows. The creature walks backward with its head lowered between its hind legs. It resembles a hornless goat, emits a very nauseating smell and possesses a pair of very large ears which are capable of clapping like a pair of hands. It is also claimed to issue forth from its lair during Holy Week, looking for children that it will kill for the heart, which is made into an amulet.

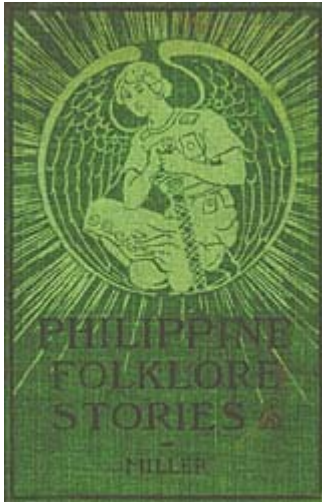
It is also believed that there are families known as Sigbinan "those who own Sigbin", who possess the power to command them. The aswang, the Philippine version of a witch, is said to keep it as a pet, along with another mythical creature, a bird known as the Wakwak. The sigbin is said to bring wealth and luck to its owners.

In the Eastern Visayas they are also known as the Amamayong.

There is speculation that the legend may be based on sightings of an actual animal species that is rarely seen; based on the description of the sigbin in popular literature, the animal species might be related to the kangaroo. With the recent discovery in the island of Borneo of the cat-fox, a potential new species of carnivore described as having hind legs that are lower than its front legs, the animal species that is the possible basis of the legend as well as the reported sightings of sigbin may belong to or is related to the cat-fox species.

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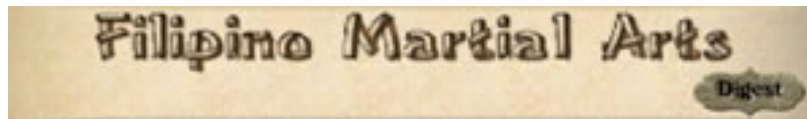
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